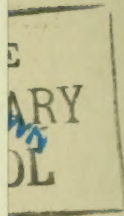


ADDRESSES  
ON THE  
GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN

DUKE  
UNIVERSITY

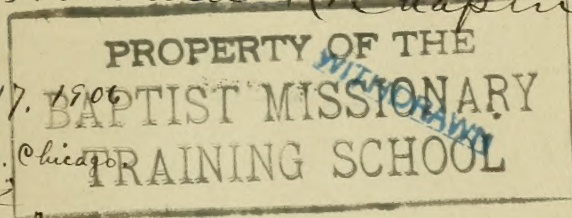


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*St. John Conferences, Providence, R. I.*

## ADDRESSES

ON THE

# GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN

DELIVERED IN PROVIDENCE, R. I., AT EIGHT CONFERENCES HELD

BETWEEN OCTOBER 21, 1903, AND MAY 11, 1904

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## PREFACE.

During the year 1902-3 a series of Saturday afternoon conferences for pastors, addressed by Seminary Professors, was held at the Y. M. C. A. Hall in Providence. The subjects and speakers were as follows:—

November 29, 1902. "The Unique Character of the Gospel of John". Professor M. W. Jacobus, D.D., and Professor C. S. Beardslee, D.D., of Hartford Theological Seminary.

January 31, 1903. "The Grace and Truth that came by Jesus Christ". (John 1:17 and 1:14). Professor George B. Stevens, D.D., and Professor Frank K. Sanders, D.D., of the Yale Divinity School.

March 7. "Johannine Antitheses". Professor Henry C. Sheldon, S.T.D., of the Boston University School of Theology.

April 18. "The Father, the Saviour, the Comforter". (John 14). Professor William H. Ryder, D.D., of Andover Theological Seminary.

May 16. "That they all may be one". (John 17). President W. H. P. Faunce, D.D., and Professor Henry T. Fowler, Ph.D., of Brown University.

Several of the above named Professors spoke in churches of the city on themes in John's Gospel on the Sundays following the Conferences.

\* Previous to this series of conferences many pastors in Rhode Island had taken up this Gospel in the mid-week meeting of the church. Dr. Henry M. King, Pastor of the First Baptist Church, of Providence, in introducing Professors Jacobus and Beardslee at the first of the above mentioned conferences spoke as follows concerning the experience of his own church the preceding year:—

"I have never had a year of such prayer meetings in all my ministry. The attendance has been increased and an unusually large number of people have taken

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\* A series of monthly conferences had also been held in South-Western Washington County, R. I., under the auspices of a Washington County Interdenominational Committee of which Rev. Alexander McLearn, Pastor of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Rockville, R. I., was chairman. The study of the Gospel was begun on December 4, 1900 (Rockville), and completed July 24, 1901. Between these dates over fifty conferences were held in fifteen different villages, three of these being held in Connecticut. Three chapters were taken each month. The conferences were conducted and addressed by the local pastors, assisted by the ministers of Westerly. Several speakers came from a distance, viz.: Professor Frederick L. Anderson, D.D., of Newton Theological Institution, Professor Wm. H. Ryder, D.D., of Andover Theological Seminary, Professor Charles F. Kent, Ph.D., of Brown University (now of Yale), Rev. L. L. Henson, D.D., and Rev. L. S. Woodworth, of Providence.

Through the courtesy of the editors of the local papers, viz.: Hon. George H. Utter of the Westerly Daily Sun, Mr. Edward T. Spencer of the Hope Valley Advertiser, and Mr. John Larkin of the Hope Valley Free Press, a series of "Talks on John's Gospel" had been published at frequent intervals, contributed to by well known ministers of Rhode Island and other states. It had been hoped that this valuable series might be included in the present volume, but the limits of space did not permit. A few of these articles, however, of a nature supplementary to the Providence Addresses are printed in the Appendix (see pp. 444-480). Those contributing to this series were the following: Rev. Edward Abbott, D.D., Rev. James Church Alvord, Rev. Wm. C. Bitting, D.D., Rev. George A. Conibear, Rev. Samuel M. Dick, Ph.D., Rev. John G. Dutton, Rev. Edward O. Grisbrook, Professor Doremus A. Hayes, Ph.D., S.T.D., LL.D., Rev. Dorr A.

part. The people were very sorry when we completed John's Gospel, and some of them would have been glad to go over the same course again. It has been a revelation of the deep things of God, and has stimulated our people to spread the truth more and more. John's Gospel stands as the crowning Gospel, nearest the heart of Christ. We have commended the work to others. There has been a continuity about it which has been most profitable. It has been helpful in many ways. The spiritual life of the church has been deepened and the sense of responsibility to win others to the same knowledge of Christ has been increased. I want to commend this as a system. We are now to take up John's Epistles in the same way".\*

It has of course been a common practice for pastors to take up some one book of the Bible consecutively in the mid-week meeting. Professor F. L. Anderson of Newton had a most interesting experience with St. John's Gospel when pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Rochester, N. Y. One chapter was taken each week. The attendance was large, sometimes reaching 200. Each person attending was requested to read the chapter at least once during the week and, if possible, once each day. At the meeting attention would be concentrated on one or two of the great themes of the chapter. Dr. Richards, of St. John's Church, Providence, relates that some years ago Phillips Brooks told him that he began to lecture weekly on St. John's Gospel the preceding fall, and that at the end of the winter was but half through. Dr. Richards laughed at his slow progress, tried the experiment himself, and at the end of the winter's lecturing found he had only reached chapter seven! Probably the most effective method, the one that would hold the greatest interest of the greatest number, would be the more rapid one of a chapter a week, or at any rate the completing of the Gospel during the church year. This plan might be varied by taking, also, great themes of St. John occasionally at the Sabbath morning or evening service.

The interest in the series of Saturday afternoon conferences mentioned above was such as to warrant the suggestion of a more thorough-going effort the following

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\*Quoted from "The Polished Arrow", organ of the Pawtucket Congregational Church, which was among the churches taking John's Gospel the current year.

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Hudson, Rt. Rev. Frederick D. Huntington, S.T.D., D.C.L., LL.D., Rev. Reuben Kidner, Rev. Henry M. King, D.D., Rev. Alexander McKenzie, D.D., Rev. Wm. W. McLane, Ph.D., D.D., Rev. Rennetts C. Miller, Rev. James Lee Mitchell, Ph.D., Rev. Wm. J. Mutch, Ph.D., Rev. Frederic Palmer, A.M., Rev. Arthur B. Patten, Rev. Edwin M. Poteat, D.D., Rev. C. A. L. Richards, D.D., Professor A. T. Robertson, D.D., Rev. E. Talmadge Root, Rev. George W. Shinn, D.D., Rev. Reuben Thomas, D.D., Rev. Willard Brown Thorp, Rev. Horace W. Tilden, D.D., Rev. James G. Vose, D.D., Rev. Wm. Hayes Ward, D.D., LL.D., Rev. Ernest G. Wellesley-Wesley, President Henry G. Weston, D.D., LL.D., Professor William C. Whitford, A.M., Professor Irving F. Wood, Ph.D., Rev. S. H. Woodrow, D.D.

During the absence in Palestine of Professor James S. Riggs, D.D., of Auburn Theological Seminary, who had consented to prepare for the pastors outlines on the Gospel, valuable outlines were prepared by Professor Edward E. Nourse of Hartford Theological Seminary. Subsequently outlines were prepared by Professor Riggs (76 pages), which were found exceedingly useful and stimulating by the churches using them. Of these outlines Professor Beardslee has written these words: "They are the work of a steady hand. In well-nigh every sentence a trained and tireless finger points straight at some problem or some treasure among the many with which this book abounds. I know of no guide at once so handy and so sure to shape the course of any honest and resolute explorer amidst the teeming wealth that here awaits and rewards all intent research". Professor Hayes has also written as follows: "I am delighted with them. They must be invaluable to beginning students of the Gospel according to John: and mature students must find much in them that is stimulating and suggestive. I should think that one who would master all the outlines, answer all the questions, study all the topics for research, and read all the suggested literature might well begin to feel like an expert himself, in this field. They are the helps which only a master could furnish: and we may all feel grateful for the work he has done for us". It is hoped that they may be published by the author.

Papers were printed on individual chapters of the Gospel contributed by the following: Professor D. A. Hayes, S.T.D., of Garrett Biblical Institute (Chapter 2); Professor Charles C. Camp, of Seabury



year. At the final conference, held on May 16, 1903, the following resolution was adopted :—

“ WHEREAS, The Gospel of John occupies a central and commanding position among the New Testament writings, owing to its deep unfolding of the truths of Christ and to its intimate disclosure of the heart and mind of the Master, and

“ WHEREAS, These truths of Christ are the fundamental principles of Christianity and the very life blood of the Christian Church,

“ Therefore, be it Resolved, That we do recommend to the churches of the city and state special study of and work with this Gospel during the months of the coming year in such ways as may commend themselves to the individual pastors. We would suggest, as a central source of inspiration and suggestion, a series of conferences to be held at stated intervals during the year, at which teachers and preachers of the different denominations shall be asked to speak with the aim of bringing strongly home to the hearts and minds of both ministers and people these deep, vital truths so essential to the vigorous life and work of the church ”.

In accordance with this resolution a committee was appointed to have charge of the conferences consisting of the following pastors of Providence and Pawtucket :—

Rev. Carter E. Cate, D.D., Chairman, Rev. Arthur M. Aucock, Rev. Frank J.

Divinity School (Chapter 4); Professor Edward I. Bosworth, D.D., of Oberlin Theological Seminary (Chapter 6); Professor F. L. Anderson, D.D., of Newton Theological Institution (Chapter 12). The deepest obligation was felt by the Washington County pastors to all who, in these various ways, so generously assisted them.

The conferences were greatly enjoyed and the opportunity to listen to continuous expositions of large sections of the scripture was appreciated. The verdict of those attending them was, “ We are glad to have the ministers get behind the Gospel ”.

The following is a schedule of the local conferences held on Chapters 13, 14 and 15. Other places at which conferences were held during the season were Shannock and Hope Valley, R. I.; other pastors giving addresses were Rev. L. F. Randolph, Rev. John M. Paige, Rev. Warren Dawley, Rev. F. C. Baker, Rev. Wm. J. Sholar.

	CHAPTER 13.	CHAPTER 14.	CHAPTER 15.
Laurel Glen, Conn., 1Wednesday, April 17.	Rev. E. P. Mathewson.	Rev. F. D. Luddington.	
Carolina, R. I., 2Friday, April 19*.		Rev. H. A. Cornell.	
Alton, R. I., 1Tuesday, April 23.	Rev. C. A. Burdick.		Rev. W. D. Wilcox.
Wood River Junction, R. I., 1Friday, April 26.†	Rev. F. H. Decker.	Prof. W. H. Ryder, D.D.	Rev. E. M. Wilson.
Ashaway, R. I., 2Friday, April 26.	Rev. C. A. Burdick.	Professor Ryder.	Rev. John G. Dutton.
Hopkinton, R. I., 3Saturday, April 27.	Rev. E. P. Mathewson.	Professor Ryder.	Dea. Geo. H. Utter.
Rockville, R. I., 1Tuesday, April 30.	Rev. Alex. McLearn.	Rev. C. A. Burdick.	Rev. E. I. Lindh.
Pendleton Hill, Conn., 1Wednesday, May 1.	Rev. E. P. Mathewson.	Rev. F. D. Luddington.	Rev. Alex. McLearn.
Miner's Meeting House, Conn., 1Tuesday, May 7.	Rev. C. A. Burdick.		
Woodville, R. I., 4Tuesday, May 7.	Rev. Daniel Davis.	Dea. Edwin A. Lewis.	
Niantic, R. I., 4Thursday, May 9.	Rev. O. U. Whitford.	Rev. Horace Stillman.	Dea. Edwin A. Lewis.
Dunn's Corners, R. I., 3Saturday, May 11.	Rev. O. U. Whitford.	{ Rev. Horace Stillman. { Rev. N. M. Mills.	
Perryville, R. I., 3Sunday, May 12.		Dea. Edwin A. Lewis.	Rev. E. M. Wilson.

\*Sermon, evening, Rev. Wm. L. Swan. †Also brief address by Rev. Alexander McLearn.

1Afternoon. 2Afternoon and Evening. 3Morning and Afternoon (Seventh Day Baptist). 4Evening.  
5Morning.

Goodwin, Rev. John R. Brown, Rev. Archibald McCord, Rev. J. Francis Cooper, Rev. Henry M. King, D. D.

Rev. T. H. Root (Alton, R. I.) was elected to act as Secretary.

Other committees were constituted as follows:—

*Finance Committee*—Hon. Rathbone Gardner, Chairman, Mr. A. B. McCrillis, Mr. C. E. Hancock, Mr. Albert C. Day, Rev. John M. Lowden, Mr. J. Wm. Rice, Mr. Geo. P. Peterson, Mr. H. E. Thurston, Mr. David Wilmot, Rev. A. E. Krom, Dr. F. B. Sprague, Mr. C. R. Thurston, Rev. Robert Cameron, D.D., Hon. D. Russell Brown, Rev. A. J. Coultas, Mr. E. P. Metcalf, Mr. Wm. A. Walton, Hon. C. C. Mumford, Mr. John F. Greene, Mr. F. O. Bishop, Rev. Robert B. Parker, Mr. F. H. Fuller, Mr. Gideon G. Congdon, Mr. F. W. Marden, Dr. Albert L. Morrison, Mr. T. W. Waterman, Hon. N. W. Littlefield.

*Publication Committee*—Rev. Edward C. Bass, D.D., Chairman, Rev. T. E. Bartlett, Rev. Levi B. Edwards, Rev. M. S. McCord, D.D., Rev. George A. Conibear, Rev. John J. Hall, Rev. H. C. Lowden, Rev. Wm. H. Durfee, Rev. T. F. Norris, Rev. Warren Dawley, Rev. Clayton A. Burdick, Mr. A. B. McCrillis, Hon. N. W. Littlefield, Mr. Herbert E. Drake, Hon. D. L. D. Granger, Mr. N. A. Westcott, Mr. Edward P. Metcalf, Mr. Albert C. Day.

The programs of the eight Conferences held during the year 1903-4, giving dates, speakers, subjects,\* etc., will be found in the Appendix (pp. 487-492). Of the fifty-four addresses delivered fifty-two are printed either in full or in part in this volume. Two of the addresses are absent as the speakers were unable to furnish manuscript. In arranging the Conferences it has been the purpose of the committee that they should represent the consensus of the thought of the Church. It has not been the purpose to introduce the controversial element. The committee do not, of course, assume responsibility for any of the opinions expressed. The value of the volume is much increased by the very complete analysis by Professor Anderson and by the Suggestive Studies and References by Professor Beardslee, both of which were prepared expressly for the Rhode Island pastors; also by several articles contributed to the series in the press (see note, p. iii, Preface). It is believed that the Indices to Authors and to Texts will also add interest and usefulness to the volume.

The Rhode Island churches appreciate very deeply the great service rendered without remuneration by the Conference speakers. It was entirely on their part a labor of love for the Gospel, and of desire to assist the Rhode Island pastors in this work. The deep interest which followed the successive Conferences on the part of the large audiences that gathered from month to month was a sufficient attestation of the spiritual strength and scholarly power brought to the Conferences by men of many types of mind and of various ecclesiastical fellowships. The following words by the Providence correspondent of the "Watchman" were written immediately after the first Conference:—"The speakers were men competent to instruct as well as to kindle ardor for truth. No series of meetings in this generation in Providence has so taken hold of the best minds in all churches. Teachers representing the leading denominations come with their best thought to expound the profound teaching of John". At the close of the series the following statement was made by President Faunce of Brown University:—"One of the most valuable helps to the intellectual and religious life of the city of Providence during the past

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\* It will be observed that many of the great themes of the Gospel and very many of the secondary themes have not been treated. Several of these were assigned either to professors or to ministers, but those to whom requests were sent, were unable to respond because of engagements already entered into. The volume by what it omits to do as well as by what it does will suggest the inexhaustible riches of this Gospel.



year has been the series of really remarkable Conferences on the Gospel of John. Seldom have we had in our city so many speakers of eminence on religious themes, and never have we had more deeply interested audiences".

The Conferences were, to quote the words of Bishop Jaggar, a "manifestation of the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace". Through many voices it was the one church that spoke, and the consciousness of the one church was deepened in the minds of all who attended. The Conferences bore signal witness to the growing unity of Christians, and to the strength of united effort.

One familiar with St. John's Gospel will readily understand why it has been chosen for special presentation in this way. The Gospel of St. John is remarkable in its unity of structure, in its singleness of purpose in portraying Jesus as the Christ, in the richness and profoundness of its teachings, and in its unique revelation of the personality and work of Christ. It is pervaded throughout by the deepest spirit of poetry and is characterized by the deepest philosophic insight. It speaks to the hearts and minds of all Christians, regardless of denomination or theological outlook. Both liberal and conservative are one in their love of this book. Testimony to its power, to the depth and clearness, the grandeur and simplicity of its revelation of the Master is found in every age and in every body of Christians.

It is the most vital and vitalizing of the Gospels, preeminent in its urgent enjoining both of the "new commandment" as the organic law of the Christian Church and also of the militant purpose of winning men to Christ. In it are found not only the principles but also the methods for which the church in the present day is so earnestly seeking as the means of a more vital and fruitful work. It throbs intensely with the very heart of Christ. Meditation on and practice of its truths are the only means by which the heart of Christ may become the heart of the Church.

It has been called the Theological Gospel because interpreting so deeply the Person and Teachings of Christ; the Evangelical Gospel because so intensely permeated with the purpose that men may believe;\* it might also be called the Ethical Gospel so lofty is its standard of Christian obligation in its insistence on obedience to the commands of Christ and on the doing of the will of God. (It was well said by one of the Conference speakers that a book would yet be written on the Ethics of St. John's Gospel). It has its peculiar grip on the heart and life because in it the disciple is brought into the very presence of the heart and mind of the Master. It presents the psychology of the Christian life because it reveals so much of the inmost consciousness of Christ, and because in it Christ makes clear so many of the inner relationships of truth and life in the soul of the disciple. Its keynotes are universal words. It appeals to those who seek the eternal truth and life and love. To the mind of today it presents Christianity in a peculiarly sympathetic way.

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\* In response to the question, "Do you think the purpose of the author was to win those not believing to belief in Christ, or to deepen the belief of believers?" the following informal replies were received:—

*Professor Anthony*.—"I regard the Gospel as an *apologetic*, written both to *confirm*, and to *produce, belief*".

*Professor Beardslee*.—"I should prefer not to try to distinguish, as your question suggests. I should rather say in general that its aim was to engender and establish faith".

*Professor Hayes*.—"Why may we not say that John wrote primarily for the church, to establish it in the faith: but with the whole world of readers in the background of his thought?"

*Professor Jacobus*.—"If, as seems most likely, the First Epistle of John was written in connection with the Gospel of John, it would seem almost beyond question that the Gospel itself was written for those who were already Christians but who, under the influence of false teaching regarding Christ and the

It was said by a German philosopher of the first half of the century just closed, that the Gospel of John was the Gospel of the church of the future; that the church of that time was not yet up to it. Whether or not this were true for that time and country, we do not believe it is true of the church in America today. No Gospel is so dear, and none appeals so strongly to Christian people as this Gospel.† The church finds itself—its purposes, its ideals, its aspirations, its duty, its work, its life, in this Gospel written by the beloved apostle. And in coming to this Gospel it also becomes deeply conscious of its own failures and shortcomings.

In emphasizing the peculiar worth and function of the Fourth Gospel the value of the Synoptic Gospels must not be underestimated. It is only after a study of St. John that the range, the depth and the crystalline clearness of the Synoptic records can be fully appreciated. The Christ portrayed by St. John is the Christ who is revealed to us as by a lightning flash in Matthew 11:25-30 and Luke 10:21, 22.

We can not refrain from quoting here the closing words of Professor Riggs in the Outlines mentioned above (see note, p. iv of Preface):—

"Our study of this noble Gospel has come to an end. To that study which makes experience, life the chief interpreter, there can never be an end. It calls us

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†The uniqueness of John's Gospel consists, among other things, in its unique presentation of these three cardinal ideas of Christianity:—belief in Jesus as the Christ; obedience to the "new commandment"; the relationship to God of being "sent".

I. To show the emphasis placed on this ruling idea of the Fourth Gospel the passages bearing on this subject of belief in Jesus as the Christ are given herewith: 1:7—1:12—1:50—2:11—2:23—3:15—3:16—3:18—3:36—4:39—4:41—4:42—4:53—5:38—5:44—5:46—5:47—6:29—6:30—6:35—6:36—6:40—6:47—6:64—6:69—7:5—7:31—7:38—7:39—7:48—8:24—8:30—8:31—8:45—8:46—9:35—9:36—9:38—10:25—10:26—10:37—10:38—10:42—11:15—11:25—11:26—11:27—11:40—11:42—11:45—11:48—12:11—12:36—12:37—12:39—12:42—12:44—12:46—13:19—14:1—14:10—14:11—14:12—14:29—16:9—16:27—16:30—16:31—17:8—17:20—17:21—19:35—20:8—20:25—20:27—20:29—20:31. The purpose of John's Gospel to demonstrate that Jesus is the true and eternal life for every man represents the militant character of Christianity. Acceptance of the principles and standards of Christianity means acceptance of and devotion to the purpose and work of Christ "that the world may believe". The spirit of the church is one of conquest. It is indeed a militant church.

II. The new life brought into the world by Christ (as revealed in the cross) must be embodied in a new law, and that law, stated with special reference to the relation of the disciples one to another, is the "new commandment". The law of self-sacrificing love even unto death which was the principle of His life, is to be

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Christian life, needed to have the teachings of Christ regarding Himself and His religion placed before them in new and impressive ways.

"This would seem to be confirmed by the definite statement of the author of the Gospel at the close of the twentieth chapter, which speaks of the Gospel as presenting Jesus as the Christ through faith in whom, that is through a real and vital faith in whom alone, a full and vital Christian life is possible".

*Professor Nash*:—"I do not believe that the author of the Fourth Gospel consciously separated the two things. But the end and aim is the demonstration to the world that Jesus is the Christ of God. The other motive, however, was a part of the whole".

*Professor Sitterly*:—"Like John's Epistles and Apocalypses I am of opinion that his Gospel was written to strengthen 'the belief of believers'".

*Professor Stevens*:—"I should say the Fourth Gospel was written for Christian Churches and believers, as were the other three, and in order to produce and develop faith in Jesus Christ. It assumes, as already existing, some knowledge of the Gospel facts, and an already existing germ of Christian faith on the part of its readers".

*Professor White*:—"I do not know what is the basis for the opinion held by some that the Gospel was written for believers chiefly. It certainly does greatly strengthen believers, but I do think it was written primarily for outsiders. Surely the statement of 20:30, 31 looks strongly towards this".

*Professor Whitford*:—"I think that John's purpose was to produce faith in Jesus. Of course such a book as his can not fail to strengthen the faith of those who already believe".

See also pages 99-106 and other passages throughout the book.

to go on to know the Lord through all the profound realities of communion and obedience which involve the ultimate depths of life. The deeper we go by this way of interpretation the surer shall we be that this is no fabricated portrait of the Master. It is rather the picture of one who saw not merely the scenery of Galilee and Judea, nor simply the external forms of that memorable group now known as Master and Disciples, but whose profoundly religious spirit, touched, illumined, guided by the Spirit of Truth, grasped the eternal significance of Him to whom His life had been given. Is there a subjective element in John? Of course there is, but it is the subjectivism of one whose insight was directed to the inner, eternal meanings of Jesus. Rightly has it been said that John saw Jesus and His truth *sub specie Eternitatis*. Does that make the Gospel less true? Evidence enough

the principle of their life. Thus the actual life of Christ is to become the actual life of the church. He calls the disciples unto Him that they may possess this life and in turn be workers with Him in bringing this life to others.

Through the "new commandment" the power of the cross becomes the power of the church organizing (see p. 276) its heterogeneous and oftentimes apparently irreconcilable elements into a deep and living unity. This is the great miracle which when accomplished proves to the world the genuineness of Christian discipleship (13:35) and also the divineness of Christ's mission (17:21). Failure to observe the "new commandment" has been the cause of the downfall of many a church. The militant purpose toward those without and the new commandment working within give to the church an *esprit de corps* which makes it invincible.

In Chapters 1-12 the great word is *belief*; in Chapters 13-21 the great word is *love*, occasionally interwoven with the word *belief*. Belief in Christ leads to love for, obedience to, union with Christ. *Belief* is the gateway to the eternal life of self-sacrificing *love*. For passages bearing on the "new commandment" and on the unity that results from obedience to it, see 13:34-13:35-15:12-15:13-15:17-13:14-16-17:11-17:21-17:22-17:23 (see also 13:1-15:9-17:26).

III. The many different connections in which Jesus speaks of "him that sent me" show how central and fundamental was Jesus' consciousness of being "sent". The iteration and reiteration of this is most striking. It is an ever recurring refrain (as in "the will of him that sent me", 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; cf. Matt. 6:10; 7:21; 12:50; 26:39, 42, etc.). Christ would have this consciousness become the consciousness of the church. When we notice that the phrase "sent" in connection with Christ is used 40 times before it is used in the final passage, we realize the tremendous impressiveness of the words of Jesus, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (20:21; see also 17:18). Relationship with Christ in learning becomes relationship with Christ in being "sent". Note Professor Nash's definition of the living church as composed of those who have learned how to pray and therefore have learned how to work (p. 157). For passages see 3:17-3:34-4:34-5:23-5:24-5:30-5:36-5:37-5:38-6:29-6:38-6:39-6:44-6:57-7:16-7:18-7:28-7:29-7:33-8:16-8:18-8:26-8:29-8:42-9:4-10:36-11:42-12:44-12:45-12:49-13:20-14:24-15:21-16:5-17:3-17:8-17:18-17:21-17:23-17:25-20:21. Cf. Matt. 10:40; Mk. 9:37; Lk. 9:48; 10:16. Christ's relation to the world is complementary to His relation to God. The force with which He is sent to the world is the same as that with which He is sent from the Father. In the Synoptic Gospels the emphasis is on the former; in the Fourth Gospel on the latter. See Lk. 5:32; 19:10; Matt. 20:28; 15:24; Lk. 4:43.

As is seen by reading the references under the above headings John's Gospel holds up to us in a peculiarly vivid and definite way Jesus' consciousness of being "sent" to do the will of God; Jesus' purpose that the world may believe; Jesus' teaching of the new commandment of self-sacrificing love. These three ideas are the elemental principles of Christianity. They represent a purpose, life, consciousness of Christ, which in turn are to become the purpose, life, consciousness of the church, that the life of God which was in Christ, the eternal life of self-sacrificing love as manifested in the cross, may be in them: "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me". The militant purpose of the church is that men may believe, its life is the life of self-sacrificing love, its consciousness is that of being "sent" by Christ. A church with such a life and with such a purpose and with such a propulsive force from Christ its Lord has within itself unlimited reserves of power.

These three principles represent the movement of the Christian life:—drawn to Christ in belief, united with one another in love, sent out into the world in service. The most conspicuous New Testament example of marvellous realization of this three-fold relationship is the Apostle Paul.

It will be noticed that these three cardinal ideas are very closely involved in the purpose of the Gospel as stated in 20:31. Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, is sent into the world that men may believe, and that believing they may enter into the eternal life of self-sacrificing love.

This is He whom the church knows as King of Truth, and Life of the human race.



there is of its historicity. No other Gospel is more faithful to historical situations; no other Gospel is more keenly alive to psychological presentations. Its portraiture of Jesus, different as is its setting from that of the Synoptics, is thoroughly consistent with theirs. What they exhibit constantly in action and now and then by word is here completely interpreted in that blaze of glory which casts a noon-day clearness upon the person and character of the Messiah".

During the progress of the Conferences subscriptions for a proposed volume were taken and at the close of the series enough had been received to ensure the printing of the addresses given. The committee are especially grateful to these earliest subscribers without whose prompt support the volume would have been impossible. One of the inspirations in the work of the Conferences has been the fact that through the volume a medium will be furnished by which the best which a large city like Providence can command will be made available for the pastor and teacher in the remotest hamlet of the state. In serving the Providence churches the speakers have been serving the churches of the entire state. The interest which has been manifested by many outside Rhode Island has also been most gratifying. Subscriptions for from one to one hundred copies have been received from churches, seminaries and individuals beyond the borders of the state. The committee are most grateful to the speakers for their constant encouragement and cooperation. They can best show their appreciation of this cordial support from the first and of the great merit of the addresses, by endeavoring to give to the volume as wide a circulation as possible. Should the sale of the book be sufficient to give a surplus, this will be devoted to interdenominational purposes.

The special thanks of the committee are due to Hon. Nathan W. Littlefield for his generous services as Treasurer of the Conferences and for much labor spent in connection with the Business Men's Lunch of January 13; to Rev. Albert F. Bassford, a student in Brown University, for careful stenographic reports of many of the addresses; also to Mr. A. B. McCrillis and to Mr. Albert C. Day for important aid rendered in receiving subscriptions from outside Rhode Island. Mr. Day has also kindly consented to act as Treasurer of the Publication Committee. The committee take pleasure also in acknowledging the uniform courtesy of the daily press — the Journal and Bulletin, the News, and the Telegram — in reporting the Conferences.

Particularly is the committee under obligation to Rev. Thomas E. Bartlett, pastor of the Pawtuxet Baptist Church, who has corrected the proof and supervised the book through the press, and for whose indefatigable labor and constant vigilance every reader will be grateful.

The Committee wish to thank most heartily all those who whether in the Conferences or by private subscription contributed to the necessary expenses of the Conferences; also all those who in many other ways have aided in connection with the Conferences or in connection with the resulting volume. For all the Committees as well as for very many individuals, whose names are not mentioned in the volume but who have done much to assist, the entire work connected with both Conferences and volume has been a labor of love.

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BUT AS MANY AS RECEIVED HIM, TO THEM GAVE HE POWER TO BECOME THE SONS OF GOD, EVEN TO THEM THAT BELIEVE ON HIS NAME.

AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH, AND DWELT AMONG US, (AND WE BEHELD HIS GLORY, THE GLORY AS OF THE ONLY BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER,) FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH.

FOR AS THE FATHER HATH LIFE IN HIMSELF; SO HATH HE GIVEN TO THE SON TO HAVE LIFE IN HIMSELF.

AND I, IF I BE LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH, WILL DRAW ALL MEN UNTO ME.

I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD: HE THAT FOLLOWETH ME SHALL NOT WALK IN DARKNESS, BUT SHALL HAVE THE LIGHT OF LIFE.

A NEW COMMANDMENT I GIVE UNTO YOU, THAT YE LOVE ONE ANOTHER; AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, THAT YE ALSO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. BY THIS SHALL ALL MEN KNOW THAT YE ARE MY DISCIPLES, IF YE HAVE LOVE ONE TO ANOTHER.

IF A MAN LOVE ME, HE WILL KEEP MY WORDS: AND MY FATHER WILL LOVE HIM, AND WE WILL COME UNTO HIM, AND MAKE OUR ABODE WITH HIM.

I IN THEM, AND THOU IN ME, THAT THEY MAY BE MADE PERFECT IN ONE; AND THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW THAT THOU HAST SENT ME, AND HAST LOVED THEM, AS THOU HAST LOVED ME.

AS MY FATHER HATH SENT ME, EVEN SO SEND I YOU.



“But patient stated much of the Lord's life  
Forgotten or misdelivered, and let it work :  
Since much that at the first, in deed and word,  
Lay simply and sufficiently exposed,  
Had grown (or else my soul was grown to match,  
Fed through such years, familiar with such light,  
Guarded and guided still to see and speak)  
Of new significance and fresh result ;  
What first were guessed as points, I now knew stars,  
And named them in the Gospel I have writ.”

—*Browning: “A Death in the Desert.”*



## \* MEN AND EVENTS IN THE TIME OF JESUS.

BY REV. CHARLES F. SITTERLY, PH. D., S. T. D.,

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Whether history ever repeats itself is open to debate, but there can be no question that the historical situation into which Jesus was born was wholly unique. Like conditions had certainly never before been realized since the world began, and it is just as clear that their duplicate can never be approximated in the ages to come.

The signs of Jesus' times were peculiarly obscure to the men of His generation, but they have ever since been growing more significant and luminous until today even the rapid runner and the traveling man may rightly read them. To be sure, His horoscope had been cast at the beginning with a definiteness of detail both as to time, place, and singular circumstances, but even those who searched the Sacred Writings most diligently missed utterly the meaning of their testimony unto Him, and it fell in His day, and so far forth until the present, that strangers took Him in and proclaimed and finally crowned Him, while they who were His own not only wilfully misread His credentials in all their Scriptures from Moses until John, but entering into partnership with the proud princes of this world, they finally condemned and crucified their own rightful King.

There are three standpoints from which one may view any great historical character with profit, and these contemplate Him in His relation to the social, the political, and the religious tendencies of His times. Of course, these relations commingle, and they may not be arbitrarily measured as separate one from the other, but they are capable of practical distinction and are certainly helpful to orderly discussion.

When Jesus, after thirty years of preparation, entered upon His Messianic mission, He was challenged by Satan from these three standpoints.

(1) "If Thou art indeed Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread—abolish hunger—make poverty impossible—command men to divide their inheritance—make labor lighter or do away with it altogether. Command the earth to bring forth loaves of bread already baked; give us manna for the mere gathering, as Moses did".

(2) "If Thou art Son of God, seize the reins of royalty—become the universal king. Thou seest the separate parts of that empire and the glory of them—they are all mine, and by adopting my methods they can all become yours".

(3) "If Thou art Son of God, appeal boldly to the superstitious element in mankind—cast Thyself down from the temple-top and let angels bear Thee visibly up—make display of Thy powers—conjure up and play upon the innate love of man for the spectacular and unreal—the world is

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\* Delivered at the First Conference, held at the First Baptist Church, October 21, 1903.

always ready for such leadership—worship me and I will bring you the homage of millions of men”.

Thus was Jesus of Nazareth tested in His three-fold nature, and by a careful contemplation of the three fields from which His temptation sprang may we obtain some added appreciation of His unique personality and mission.

I. First, then, we will consider *the social conditions* of the world into which Jesus was born, and I use the word “social” in the work-a-day or domestic sense, inclusive of physical and temporal environment. In the province of Galilee, where most happily Jesus was brought up, there existed in miniature all the diverse conditions and combinations of human society. Galilee was the garden of the Holy Land, and its native or Jewish population was very largely engaged in agricultural pursuits. To engage in manual labor was no disgrace to the Hebrew, the disgrace rested rather upon him who would not work. Oil, wine, wheat, fruits, and fish were produced in great quantities. Abundance of flax was raised, and the linen fabrics made by the women of Galilee were of unusual fineness and beauty. A peculiar kind of pottery, made from the black clay found in the region of Cana, was highly esteemed throughout Syria. Magdala boasted of over 300 shops where pigeons for the sacrifices were sold, Safed was celebrated for its honey, Shikmonah for its pomegranates, Akabar for the raising of pheasants, and Sepphoris, the hitherto capital of the province, was noted for the production of grain and fruit, Arbela was celebrated for its manufacture of cloth, Tarichaea, on Lake Galilee, was known throughout the east for its extensive fish factories, and from this same port on the lake, Josephus in his day collected a fleet of 230 ships to lead in the attack upon Tiberias. It is evident from the mounds of ruins which today line the shores of that little lake that hundreds of thousands of souls teemed about it at the opening of the Christian era, and it is entirely probable that between two and three million people found residence in the 200 cities of this prosperous province of Galilee. The majority of these towns were distinctively Jewish, made up of families whose heads were by right as proud of their pure lineage as any household of Judea, but there was far less of narrowness and racial exclusiveness than in the more southern shire. Business interests were broader and more truly cosmopolitan, and then, as now, the measure of prosperity was more evenly shared and the commoner blessings of life were more generally distributed than in the vicinity of the Jewish capital. The very fact of their comparative isolation, on account of their distance from the sacred center, together with that of their proximity to distinctly Gentile communities, tended to deepen and intensify racial pride and patriotism while, at the same time, it broadened the provincials in a most wholesome way. The malicious fling at Jesus as one “from Nazareth,” and as “a Galilean,” did not reflect either as wide-spread or as deep-seated a contempt as is too often supposed, and it will be recalled that many of the best disciplined and the most efficient forces which supported the national cause, both with blood and with treasure, from the time of the Maccabees to those of Bar Chochba, were drawn from Galilee. But it was appropri-

ately called "Galilee of the Gentiles," and the non-Jewish element must be clearly recognized. The most marked foreign factor is properly called Greek, although the government was actually Roman. But from the days of Alexander the Great and his Seleucid successors, Greek fashions, Greek ideas, and the Greek language had taken deep hold upon the northern province of Palestine. From Ptolemais, on the seacoast, to the group of ten Greek cities called Decapolis, in the upper Jordan valley, there was a chain of Greek communities right across Galilee, which inevitably and indelibly influenced her people, and when we remember that all of the New Testament writings, as they have come down to us, have been in Greek, and more than half of its writers were natives of this province, we realize how mighty that influence must have been. We are able, also, to see why the people of Galilee lacked the narrow prejudices so common to those of Judea, and to understand how the foreign elements among them tended to develop and enlarge their minds and characters. This is doubtless one of the chief reasons why Christ and His cosmopolitan system of ethics and morals received so favorable a hearing in Galilee, and why so large a proportion of His disciples came from that province. It will be remembered that 11 of the apostolic 12 were Galileans, one only being chosen from Judea, "and he was a devil." We find, then, that what we have called the social atmosphere in which Jesus Himself was developed, and in turn developed His heaven-born Gospel, was peculiarly healthy as an environment for the reception of that Gospel both from the purity of its native elements and from the world affinities and outgoings of its foreign ingredients.

II. Let us now ascend an exceeding high mountain, and behold all the kingdoms of the world in the first century, and the glory of them, and see what attitude our Saviour takes toward the *political situation* about Him. Born during the Augustan age at the very climax of Rome's imperial prosperity, with the ears of all men still ringing with the renown of the Cæsars, and their mouths full of the tales of conspiracies and plots, the passions and the exploits of a Pompey, a Brutus, a Cassius, an Antony and a Cleopatra, all of whom had marched and countermarched across the Galilean plains, with the national tales of Maccabean bravery and valor and of Herodian duplicity and diabolism, smarting under the repeated levies of talents and of troops to keep up the pagan pageant, what real patriot could fail to feel the rising within him of a spirit of unquenchable hatred for everything foreign, and a desire for revenge, and that only equal to the depths of shame and of outrage which his land and his people had endured for generations? And Jesus was a most intense patriot, who yearned after the betterment of His own people and nation with a fervent passion which at times seemed almost to consume Him. To Him, Palestine was already the Holy Land, and He loved its hills and vales and water courses and mountains, its solitudes and forests, and its teeming cities and overflowing capital with an affection which no one else except, perhaps, David had ever approximated. He admired the splendid new temple even then in process of building, and coveted it as "for all nations the house of prayer", and He enjoyed the architectural renaissance, which was filling with great structures



every corner of the land, but He could not fail to read in these things the extension of Beelzebub's kingdom, and He was not deceived. Although Jesus was born in the reign and dominion of Herod the Great, He passed His life as a civil subject of Herod Antipas, whose tetrarchate of Galilee covered the entire period of Christ's career. Antipas inherited the political cunning of the greater Herod and ruled his province with marked success, trimming adroitly between the prejudices and customs of his Jewish and Greek subjects, never failing in his loyalty to Tiberius Cæsar, in whose honor he built and named the new capital on the lake, and yet never provoking to the brink of rebellion the liberty-loving spirit of the Galileans. Christ correctly measured and labeled him "that fox". The province of Judea was so much harder to control that, after the death of the first Herod, who for over 40 years ruled it as with a rod of iron and not improperly thereby won the title of "Great", it was taken under the immediate oversight of Roman procurators, of whom Pontius Pilate was the sixth successive appointee within 20 years. But Herod the Great had utterly demoralized and incapacitated the capital province for loyalty either to the traditions of the fathers or to the political policies of its later masters. No more consummate master in the art of corrupt diplomacy probably ever lived, or more supple acrobat in the arena of spectacular public service than the first Herod, but he was not altogether bad nor was his reign altogether without effect in preparing the hearts of the Hebrews more willingly to receive a spiritual kingdom and king. His glory as a builder of great public works was scarcely second to that of Solomon, and in Palestine even today one may trace his handiwork from end to end of the land. In Jerusalem he began by rebuilding the citadel of the temple, which he renamed Antonia in honor of Antony. He then built a group of impregnable towers on the north front of Zion. Next came a stadium, a theatre, and an amphitheatre, which last occasioned a conspiracy well-nigh costing him his life. Turning now from the capital, he began to fortify and garrison various parts of the country, in readiness for revolt. He built two strong castles, known respectively as the Herodium in Judea and the Herodium in Arabia, and rebuilt four well-situated Asmonean strongholds, which had fallen into ruin. Samaria, Cæsarea, Gaba and Heshbon he fortified and lavishly equipped as military posts. In the case of Cæsarea, he spent 12 years in developing a splendid seaport, erecting quays, moles, towers, sewers, colonnades, palaces, and temples, as well as an amphitheatre, a theatre, and a hippodrome. This soon became the Roman center of the realm. Here, as well as at Jerusalem, games were instituted in honor of the emperor every four years. These comprised gymnastic and musical games, chariot races, and contests with wild beasts, and it is not at all probable that the mass of the population, which was, of course, Jewish, kept themselves from attending them. Thus the generation to which Jesus belonged was deeply tainted with tastes and tendencies from which only a reformer "whose fan was in his hand", and whose scourge of stinging thongs could exorcise or purge them.

But the process of political servitude, so cleverly concealed and so ably carried out by Herod and his successors, had taken such vital hold upon the nation that when at last the Messiah was heralded by his forerunner and proclaimed from Heaven, and accredited by many mighty works and words of his own, neither leaders nor multitudes were able to break the hypnotic spell that rested upon them while they cried "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him, crucify Him, we have no King but Cæsar".

III. This brings us face to face with *the religious situation* which involves a problem whose complexity well nigh defies satisfactory solution. It is well known that the spiritual life of the pagan world had dwindled to the vanishing point. Among the Hebrews a few families, scattered more often in rural villages and communities of the Diaspora, kept the pure light of intelligent faith and pious living glowing in the hearts of a saving remnant, but the nation as a whole was hopelessly divided into contentious factions incapable of responding to common appeals or leadership except along the lines of the basest passions and prejudices. The two poles we may say, around which these extremes of religious energy centured were *pietism and scribism*. As has been well said "the fact that a village became a town when once it possessed ten men who agreed to be regular attendants upon the synagogue and the additional fact that later it became customary to pay these men for attending service, certainly does not heighten one's confidence in popular piety". Nevertheless the clear glimpses which the gospels give of unfeigned faith and genuine spirituality in a few sporadic cases is evidence that the synagogue was not the only school or source of religious activity. The prophetess Anna was not alone in her sympathy with Mary's glad confidence in the Messianic future of her first-born son for "she spake of Him unto *all* them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem". Nor was Simeon the only saint awaiting in expectant joy the consolation of Israel, nor was Zacharias the only priest, nor Nicodemus the only rabbi, nor Nathaniel the only Israelite who were righteous and sincere and guileless inquirers into the deepest meaning of Christ's visitation. Moreover, the fact is too often entirely overlooked that Jesus, as well as The Baptist, did in truth arouse and sustain a ready and genuine response to His uncompromising demands, and that His death was accomplished before He had been teaching his doctrine of other-worldliness three short years, and, *that* largely in a province away from the capital, all because His accusers felt and feared that they could not themselves long continue to deceive the people, if He were permitted to live and teach among them. Under the head of Pietism may properly be named a small but worthy group of men known as Essenes. In its most flourishing period the number of the Essenes did not exceed four thousand nor did they enter into vital relations with the national life, yet they gave striking utterance to the spirit of religious protest against the tendency toward both legalism and secularism which prevailed. Probably no section of Hebrew society in the days of Jesus contributed more to prepare the public mind for the reception of His teaching than the Essenes. Some have gone so far as to maintain that the household of Nazareth belonged to this sect and that our Lord's silence respecting it

arises from this fact. The oft-quoted account which Heggesippus gives of James, the Lord's brother and leader of the Jerusalem church, is construed with some show of reason as indicating the possession by that just man of the spirit, if not the enthusiasm of an Essene, while such practices among the early Christians as the common meal and their desire to hold all things in common as well as the early rise of monasticism among them are all explained in the same way. "The cheerful confidence in God, the love of peace, the unselfish life, the communism, the simplicity, the acceptance for order's sake of the law of the land and its administrators, combined with contempt for worldly dignities and disdain of personal aggrandizement, the love of one another, the tenderness toward children, to the weak, the sick, the aged, and the distressed, the love of purity and solitude as enabling the powers of the Spirit to recreate and display themselves, the avoidance of oaths, the doctrine that great truths are not welcome and therefore not beneficial to unprepared persons, these are rare attributes, but common to the Essenes and the immediate followers of Jesus". (Keningale Cook).

From the same writer we quote:—"Jesus was wont to argue not only in a sublime and generous manner of His own, but also in the subtle manner with which the doctors of the law were conversant. He used the forms of His times, and, perhaps, would else have been unintelligible, but His own splendid powers shine through. He could not have remained in any sect and the Essenes for all their spirituality and fraternity were a narrow and prejudiced sect, while He manifests the broad, unsectarian impress of Heaven". In these words we have the best that can be said relative to the similarity of Jesus' teaching to that of the Essenes and they are of value as showing that among at least one important section of Jewish society in Jesus' day the elements of a true, religious culture were openly recognized and cherished.

Under the term *Scribism* may be collated all those movements among the religious leaders of the nation which sprang from various methods of interpreting the sacred writings of the Hebrews. In addition to the priesthood after the restoration of the Jews from exile, there arose a very influential class known as the Scribes. Their great model was Ezra, whose work in restoring the national capital and institutions was only equalled by that upon the Sacred Canon. As the common speech of the Hebrews departed further and further from that of the Fathers and their earlier literature, a class of expert copyists and interpreters sprang up, and a new national institution gradually took form which became their peculiar arena known as the synagogue. This movement and institution promised much as a means of preserving pure and untainted the national consciousness relative to its calling and destiny, and its influence may be clearly traced down to the present day; but it has always sadly failed to grasp the deep spiritual message of the Scriptures it has so faithfully guarded and preserved. Although the Scribes in Jesus' day were broader and more numerous than any one sect, doubtless the larger number were included in that influential fraternity known as the Pharisees. As their name indicates they were "*separatists*" because they insisted on the separation of God's people from



all the defilements and snares of the heathen life around them. Their distinguishing characteristic was reverence for the law and "their religion was the religion of a book". Intensely earnest at its beginning, Pharisaism in the time of Jesus had lost its fervor and shrivelled up into zealous formalism. The written law of Moses had been overlaid and superseded by the oral interpretations of the elders known as the Traditions of the Fathers, and thus the Pharisees and their Scribes "*sat in Moses' seat*". Together they controlled the services of the synagogue with the various ablutions needful to the maintainance of ceremonial purity, the distinctions between clean and unclean food, the times and ways of fasting and the wearing of fringes and phylacteries.

Their insincerity and bigotry in the case of Sabbath observance was so amazing that we are not surprised to find Jesus stigmatizing both Scribes and Pharisees as *hypocrites* and as "whited sepulchres which outwardly appear beautiful but inwardly are full of dead men's bones". Certain rabbinical writers were wont to classify the Pharisees under seven heads.

(1) The Shoulder Pharisee who wore openly on his shoulder a list of his own good actions.

(2) The Temporizing Pharisee who begged for time in order to perform a good deed.

(3) The Calculating Pharisee who said "my sins are more than counterbalanced by my virtues".

(4) The Saving Pharisee who said "I will save a little of my modest fortune to perform a work of charity".

(5) The Pharisee who said "would that I knew of a sin I had myself committed that I might make reparation by an act of virtue".

(6) The God-fearing Pharisee (as Job).

(7) The God-loving Pharisee (as Abraham).

The *Sadducees* were of the aristocratic class, taking their name, as some have thought, from the house of Zadok, an ancient and honored priestly family and a long-time center of exclusiveness and bigotry. They had been successful in gaining and holding the high priesthood and had largely shaped the affairs of State. Being brought into contact with foreign ideas they had become liberal, and found in their nation's growth in temporal power and influence their greatest satisfaction. Thus a worldly spirit dominated them in life and doctrine. "They had but little sympathy with the rigid demand that religion should be the motive and measure of all action. They honored the law but refused to consider the traditions of the elders as obligatory upon them. Their faith rested upon the *written law* and they could find no sanction in their accepted scriptures for the doctrine of a resurrection of the body or of retribution in another world. They therefore rejected both". To the Sadducees the deeper doctrines and preaching of Christ appeared doubly visionary and far-fetched, and although they had but little interest in His apparent iconoclasm, they were easily led at length to see that their earthly prospects were being seriously threatened and

willingly gave themselves to carrying out the extreme plans of their Scribes as well as those of the Pharisees in condemning and crucifying the Son of Man.

Above and beyond all other elements of Scribism stood *the great Council* or Sanhedrin of Jerusalem. This body falsely claimed to be the successor of Ezra's great synagogue or assembly, but the former was a college of Scribes for settling questions of theology, whereas the Gerousia or Sanhedrin was distinctly a governing body, exercising the power or powers which in earlier days belonged almost exclusively to the High Priest. Although the Sadducees filled both the High Priesthood and the majority of the Sanhedrin, it is noteworthy that the Pharisees sometimes arose to a point of influence surpassing both combined. The functions of the Sanhedrin were numerous. It passed laws and was therefore a legislative body. It executed judgment and possessed the most extensive powers. It dealt with questions of doctrine. It kept in its archives the genealogical tables of the principal Jewish families. It even authorized wars and fixed the limits of towns, and alone had the power of modifying their precincts and those of the temple.

In the matter of penal jurisdiction, the most important and highest prerogative of the Sanhedrin, 23 members, called Beth-Din (House of Justice), were authorized to act. It is probable that on the night when Jesus was arrested, the members hurriedly called together at the house of Annas, were not more than that number. This Sanhedrin of Jerusalem which had such large powers was not competent to decide all cases or to try all crimes throughout the land. Every town, even every village had a lesser Sanhedrin, either of 23, or of seven members, in all cases connected with the local synagogue. Their place of session however was at the gate of the town. The hearing was always public and the judges forbidden to receive presents, but the equal cause of justice was not always favored by the elders of the people in Jesus' time any more than in our own.

These then were the dominant factors in shaping the religious life of the Hebrews in the first century. The Sadducees, as we have seen, held the official positions both in civil and ecclesiastical affairs, and many of them were very rich. The Pharisees and Scribes dominated the middle class, while the Essenes refused to take seriously any of the relations or responsibilities of human society.

It remains only to mention the great mass of the common people who were, generally speaking, a virile and virtue-loving multitude largely under the domination of the Pharisees but by no means dead to the appeals of either a true patriotism or real religion. But down below all these there was a large class of men who had lost all connection with religion and well ordered humanity—"the Publicans, Harlots and sinners"—for whose souls no man much cared. To the Saviour these last possessed souls in reality less leprous—spirits less blackened—hearts less hardened, and minds less closed to His Heaven-given gospel than the wise and prudent, and from them He called forth a new and true Israel, and in close co-operation with the truly pious remnant of the land, set up the Kingdom of God among men.

And thus the Sower went forth to sow His seed. His field was the world of human need. His seed was the word of heavenly hope. His soil was the hearts of sinful men. Some preempted and filled with the overgrowth of selfishness and greed, some heaped high with ridges of unyielding hardness and pride, some trampled and trodden until they had become a mere thoroughfare for the conquests of Satan.

But others prepared and responsive to Sower and seed and sun and destined to yield at the end of the age, some thirty fold and some sixty fold and some as high as an hundred fold.



## \* THE STUDY OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.

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It was about twelve years ago that, with certain misgivings concerning the genuineness and authenticity of this Fourth Gospel, I went off into the woods on the beautiful banks of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, with my New Testament, determined to read the Gospel by John through to discover more clearly what my attitude towards the book should be. I had studied it considerably before, but that day brought to me a new vision of its unity and perfection.

Turning to the twentieth chapter, thirtieth and thirty-first verses, I read the statement there found of the purpose of the writer in producing the book. He declares it to have been that the reader might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, one might have life in His name. As I read those verses that day, the thought came to me to begin at the beginning and go through the book to see if the writer made his case. Turning to the first chapter I read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made". Having read thus far, and being in a somewhat sceptical mood at the time, I said—aloud, I think,—“John, you are not giving me any reason for believing. You are making statements here which are very difficult for me to believe”. After a moment's pause I read through the sixth and seventh verses. “There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him”. When I had finished, it flashed upon me that John was going to introduce testimony, and I saw the picture of a court with judge, witnesses, jury and lawyers. I recalled a particular experience of my early boyhood when I heard a famous lawyer prosecuting a neighbor who had been arrested for murder. I remembered how this lawyer stood up at the beginning of the trial and stated to the court and to the jury in propositional form what he intended to prove. At the very outset he put the entire case as clearly and as fully as he could before his hearers and stated that he proposed to introduce testimony to prove all these points.

While I had recognized that the words “witness” and “believe” are often found in the Fourth Gospel, never before had I appreciated their importance. I literally ran through the chapters for other instances of the use of these words and marvelled, and still marvel, at the manner in which the whole argument hangs upon them, and at the wholeness of the argument which hangs upon them. The word “witness” is found, I think,

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forty-seven times, and the word "believe" about one hundred times in this Gospel by John.

At this juncture I recalled an experience with the fifth chapter and thirty-ninth verse which I had had some time before the day of which I write. I had discovered that the Revised Version of 5:39 reads, "Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life", etc., whereas the Authorized Version reads, "Search the Scriptures". I was disappointed when I first read the Revised Version of this passage, because I had often used the other in my public addresses, and felt that it was a very important passage in emphasizing the duty of studying the Bible. I determined, however, to discover if the revision were more correct. To do this, I first examined the original and found that the verbal form is exactly the same for "Ye search" as for "Search". What was I to do next? I did what has very often helped me understand a passage. I examined the context. The result of this was that I discovered our Lord to be giving, in verses thirty to thirty-nine, a summary of the testimony which had been offered often in His behalf to the persons whom He was addressing, and in the fortieth verse He tells them what the effect of this testimony had been upon them. He said to them, "Ye will not come to Me that ye may have life". In the thirty-first verse He tells them that His testimony concerning Himself is not uncorroborated. If He were the only witness of what He was claiming for Himself, He could not expect them to believe. In saying this He had in mind the Jewish law that at the mouth of at least two witnesses the truth should be established. He appeals to the testimony of John the Baptist (v. 33) and intimates that they were not consistent in not accepting what John, whom they regarded as a very wonderful man, had said about Him. He cites also His works (v. 36) and the Father (v. 37) as witnesses, and finally the Scriptures, which the Jews were very familiar with. Now, if you will think a moment, you will see how unlikely it would be for our Lord to command these Jews, who had been all along rejecting Him, and whose unbelief in verse forty he declares to be wilful,—how unlikely, I say, that our Lord should command them to go home and study their Bibles even more about the Messiah. It was not more information they needed. The evidence presented to them was ample. The trouble with them was that they would not do that which the testimony challenged them to do, and the reason for this was, as given in verse forty-two, "Ye have not the love of God in yourselves". The trouble was not with their intellects, but with their feelings and their wills. An additional reason for accepting the Revised Version I found in the use of the word "life" in verses thirty-nine and forty. The Jews made the mistake of thinking that in the Scriptures they had life and they would not come to the Saviour in order that they might have life. They made the Bible an end in itself instead of a means to an end, a mistake which many people are making in the present day.

This passage lying, as I have above explained, in my mind became vividly present on that red letter day of which I am speaking and served as the basis of the outline which I submit below, practically all of which was

wrought out that day in the woods and has been followed with various classes and by myself many times since, every new study of which brings additional light on this marvelous Fourth Gospel.

LIFE.

Ye may have life.

Believing ye may have life in His name.

These things are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His name.

### I.—TESTIMONY.

1. Testimony of John the Baptist.
2. Testimony of Jesus' Works.
3. Testimony of the Father.
4. Testimony of the Scripture.
5. Testimony of Jesus Himself.
6. Testimony of Individuals.
7. Testimony of the Holy Spirit.

### II.—BELIEF.

1. Instances of Belief.
2. Instances of Unbelief.
3. Development of Belief.
4. Development of Unbelief.
5. Secret of Belief.
6. Explanations of Unbelief.
7. Results of Belief.
8. Results of Unbelief.
9. Duty of Belief.
10. Sin of Unbelief.
11. Time of Belief.
12. Object of Belief.

Let us now follow briefly the outline above.

### I.—Testimony.

1.—The testimony of John the Baptist is very prominent in the Gospel by John. It is twice referred to even in the Prologue (John 1: 1-18). Why it is there referred to is a question, to answer which some students reading this article may profitably spend several hours. We shall not dwell upon it here.

Nothing is said about John the Baptist in the Gospel of John out of the first and third chapters, except at the end of the tenth chapter, where we



read of the people remarking that while John did no miracles, everything that he said about Jesus was true. The prominence of the testimony of John the Baptist at the beginning of the Fourth Gospel is accounted for, I think, from the fact that he was the one who pointed the writer of the Gospel to Jesus Christ. John the Evangelist was a disciple of John the Baptist. More time than is usually supposed had been spent by John the Baptist in instructing his disciples about the Messiah before Jesus came to the Jordan to be baptized. John the Evangelist was with John the Baptist when he uttered those memorable words: "Behold the Lamb of God", and at the suggestion of John the Baptist, John the Evangelist went after Jesus and never came back to his old teacher.

The Fourth Gospel is in a real sense a record of the experience of the man who wrote it. I most firmly believe that this material has been given by the inspiration of the Most High, and yet I believe that the inspiration of the Most High did not in any way interfere with the free action of the mind of John the Evangelist, and that we have here a true picture of how our Lord impressed him from the beginning to the end. You very well know how natural it is when one is speaking of his religious experience to mention the one who led him to the Saviour. This is what John the Evangelist here does. It is worth while noticing as we pass that in this Fourth Gospel John the Baptist is always called simply John, and never John the Baptist, as is the case for the most part in the other three Gospels. This, to me, is one of a number of internal evidences of the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospel by John. In the minds of the other writers there were two Johns, John the Evangelist and John the Baptist, and to distinguish them they wrote John the Baptist when they had the forerunner of our Lord in mind. The writer of the Fourth Gospel, being John, did not thus need to distinguish, for those to whom he wrote knew that he meant John the Baptist when he merely wrote "John".

The value of the testimony of John the Baptist is very great when we consider that he was the most prominent man of his time in religious matters. Thousands had been waiting on his ministry and had been baptized by him. He was fearless, courageous and truthful. Many thought that he was one of the prophets; some even wondered if he was not the Messiah; the leaders of the people sent a deputation to inquire who he was, and among the questions they asked was this, "Art thou the Christ?" In consideration of these things the testimony of John the Baptist is to be given great weight. The first chapter of John records the testimony of John the Baptist on three different occasions. The first was when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who art thou?" He assured them that he was not the Christ. With equal emphasis he denied that he was Elijah or the prophet. When they urged him to tell them who he was, reminding him that they had been officially sent to find out, he answered, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord". When they inquired his reason for baptizing, since he was not the Christ, or Elijah, or the prophet, he declared the presence of One in their midst coming after him in time, but before him in character

and mission, the latchet of whose shoes he was not worthy to unloose. The second occasion of John's testifying was on the morrow after the deputation had visited him. When he saw Jesus coming he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" and at once proceeded to explain to his hearers how he knew Jesus to be the Messiah. In doing this he related how the One who had sent him had indicated to him definitely (by what manner we know not) that upon whomsoever he should see the spirit descending and abiding, He it was who would baptize with the Holy Spirit. Solemnly, in the presence of the multitudes, he pointed to Jesus and said, "I have seen and borne witness that this is the Son of God". The third occasion was on the day after this, when John and two of his disciples saw Jesus walking. He once more said to his disciples, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

The testimony of John the Baptist on these three occasions may be summed up as follows:

The worthiest is not worthy to unloose His shoes.

He is the Lamb of God; the Son of God. On Him abides the Holy Spirit.

His mission is to take away the sin of the world and to baptize in the Holy Ghost.

What of the result of this testimony of John the Baptist? Shall we ever be able to estimate it? What effect did his words have upon the leaders of the people when the deputation reported them? How many people who heard John the next day recalled his words later and entered into the rest which Jesus freely gives? We are unable to answer these questions, but we can point to the definite results of John the Evangelist following Jesus, and of that quiet Andrew, his companion, also following Jesus. The significance of the latter fact is hardly less great than that of the former when one recalls that Andrew found his brother Simon Peter and brought him to Jesus. Shall we pause a moment and think of the vast outcome of the testimony of John the Baptist through the lives of these two of the four men of the twelve who came to Jesus that day. I refer to John the Evangelist and Peter the Apostle.

A word only about the testimony of John the Baptist, as found in the third chapter of the Gospel. It is found in the second part of the chapter, which contains two notable statements revealing to us much of the character of John the Baptist. One of these expressions is, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (v. 30). The other is, "A man can receive nothing, except it have been given him from Heaven" (v. 27). A few years ago I had no particular admiration for John the Baptist. I thought, in the first place, that he did not dress well, and then I did not like the kind of food he ate, and regarded him as unnecessarily severe. But the more I study John the Baptist and the more comprehensive my view of the Scripture becomes, the more I admire him. I suggest that you make a study of the forerunner of our Lord. Gather all the material in the Gospels about him and make an analysis of what he said about Jesus and what Jesus said about him, and if I am not greatly mistaken you will learn to love him.

Before passing from the testimony of John the Baptist, recall those words of our Lord in the fifth chapter of the Gospel by John, in which He refers to the Baptist's testimony. "Ye have sent unto John, and he hath borne witness unto the truth \* \* \*. He was the lamp that burneth and shineth; and ye were willing to rejoice for a season in his light. But the witness which I have is greater than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given Me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me".

2.—Let us now briefly note the testimony of Jesus' mighty works as presented in the Gospel by John. This Fourth Gospel records seven notable miracles. They are:

1. The changing of water into wine, ch. 2.
2. The healing of the nobleman's son at a distance, ch. 4.
3. The healing of the man lame 38 years, ch. 5.
4. The feeding of the 5,000 with the five loaves and two fishes, ch. 6.
5. Walking on the sea, ch. 6.
6. Healing a man born blind, ch. 9.
7. Raising Lazarus from the dead, ch. 11.

Several observations may be made about these miracles. They are all found in the first part of the Gospel. A noted commentator calls the twelfth chapter of the Gospel by John "the watershed of the book". The verse which indicates the great division of the book into two parts is 12:33, at the middle, together with what follows in the thirty-seventh verse, "These things spake Jesus, and He departed and hid Himself from them. But though He had done so many signs before them, yet they believed not on Him".

The word "sign", used in verse thirty-seven of the twelfth chapter, is found seventeen times in the Gospel by John. It is used only once after this verse in the twelfth chapter, and that is in 20:30-31, the key passage of the book. It will be well here to recall what that passage says, as it emphasizes the fact that the signs were given in testimony. "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His name". Notice that the antecedent of "these" in verse thirty-one is "signs", and that "these signs are written that ye may believe".

The word "sign" is one of at least four words, translated "miracle". It has a peculiar meaning, and stands for that kind of a miracle which has significance or meaning beyond itself. The selection of miracles which John made was for the purpose of setting forth spiritual truth. Hence he calls them *semeia* (signs). It will be very profitable to trace here the fifteen uses of the word in the Gospel up to the twelfth chapter and thirty-seventh verse. In 2:11 we read, "This beginning of His signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed on Him". Here you will observe the effect upon the disciples of the sign. In 2:18, "The Jews therefore answered and said unto Him, what sign showest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things?" His answer was,



"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up". The Jews misunderstood His reply, but the writer in the following verses explains that after He rose from the dead His disciples believed, for they understood that He referred to the resurrection of His body from the dead. The word is used a third time in this chapter (2:23), "Many believed on His name, beholding the signs which He did". The fourth time the word is used is in 3:2, when Nicodemus is reported as saying "Thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that Thou doest, except God be with him". The fifth time is in 4:48, "Jesus therefore said unto him, 'Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe'". The sixth time is in 4:54, "This is again the second sign that Jesus did, having come out of Judea into Galilee". The sixth chapter is the banner chapter for the use of the word. It is used four times. In 6:2 we read, "A great multitude followed Him, because they beheld the signs which He did on them that were sick". In 6:14 are the words, "When therefore the people saw the sign which He did, they said, this is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world". In 6:26, Jesus said to the multitude the day after they had been fed, "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the signs, but because ye ate of the loaves, and were filled", and in verse thirty, "They said therefore unto Him, what then doest Thou for a sign, that we may see, and believe Thee? what workest thou?" In 7:31, the multitude who believed on Him said, "When the Christ shall come, will He do more signs than those which this Man hath done?" Some, in commenting upon the miracle wrought upon the man blind from his birth (9:16), said, "How can a man which is a sinner do such signs?" Many came to Jesus and testified (10:41) that while John did no sign, everything he said about Jesus was true, and, as a consequence, believed on Him. After Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What do we? for this man doeth many signs" (11:47). A multitude went out to see Jesus and Lazarus, after he had been raised, because of the report of those who had been with Jesus when He called Lazarus out of the tomb (12:18).

3.—A close study of the passages cited above, in the light of the whole plan of the Gospel by John, will indicate how important the testimony of Jesus' mighty works was regarded. The reader is advised to follow up the study. Time after time Jesus appeals to His mighty works as evidence that He is from God. The fact is, that he joins inseparably the next line of testimony, namely, the testimony of the Father, with that of His mighty works by declaring that the Father, who is in Him, does the works. He declares that His works would not be accomplished were He alone, and that His ability to do them should be evidence to all that God was in Him and was doing His work through Him. In like manner He, before going away from His disciples, intimated to them that should they believe on Him the works that He did they would do also. In explaining this, He continued, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do". So in a very real sense we may say that as Jesus doing the works of God, both received evidence and was evidence that the Father was in Him doing His

own works, so the Son of God will dwell in us who believe and give to us and through us indisputable evidence of His presence by doing mighty works by us. Thus may we know that He is the Son of God.

4.—What shall we say of the testimony of the scriptures, to which Jesus appeals? He evidently has in mind the Old Testament. This was the Jewish Bible; it was His own Bible. In thus appealing the case beyond the limit of contemporaneous testimony, He appeals to voices from the past. And in this connection we should note that He appeals also in the seventh line of testimony, namely, that of the Holy Spirit, to an authoritative voice that is to come in the future. He thus looks backward and forward and makes present, past and future contribute its evidence to His august claims. We shall not here attempt to elaborate the testimony of the Old Testament in behalf of Jesus. It is very strong and clear. The Old Testament would not have been written if Jesus had not been coming. We may truthfully say that the New Testament would not have been written if He had not already come. He is the central figure of the entire Bible. To Him every part of it directly or indirectly points.

5.—The testimony of Jesus Himself, as recorded in this Fourth Gospel is most remarkable. The emphatic form of "I", in the Greek, is used at least twenty-six times in connection with our Lord's claim. Here are some of the expressions in which this is found: "I am He" (that is, the Messiah), 4:26; "Before Abraham was I am"; "I am the Bread of Life"; "I am the Living Bread"; "I am the Good Shepherd"; "I am the resurrection and the life"; "I am the way, and the truth and the life"; "I am the Light of the World"; "I am the Son of God"; "I am the door".

Truly this Fourth Gospel is a strong setting forth of the claims of Jesus Christ as the Son of God. One does not wonder at the strenuous attempts which have been made by the rejectors of the divinity of Jesus Christ to prove this Gospel unauthentic and non-genuine. Thank God it has stood firm against all attacks and is better accredited to-day than it has ever been.

6.—Concerning the testimony of individuals as found in the Fourth Gospel, suffer this single remark. This testimony is introduced in remarkable subordination to the general plan and purpose of the book and contributes marvelously to its beauty, unity and force. The student may prove this by examining in the light of the whole book the testimony of individuals from that of Nathaniel, in 1:49, to that of Thomas, in 20:28. Notice how strikingly these fit in with the declared object as recorded in 20:30, 31. The book there is said to have been written that "Ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God". Nathaniel's testimony, in 1:49, is, "Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel", which latter expression is equivalent to saying, "Thou art the Christ". Thomas' words are, "My Lord and my God". Will the reader pause at this point and attempt to recall individual testimony as follows: Who in the third chapter testifies, and what did he say? Who in the fourth, and what was his testimony? Who in the ninth, and what the testimony? Who in the eleventh, and what the testimony?

(A thorough examination of the Gospel for the testimony of individuals is earnestly recommended.)

7.—The testimony of the Holy Spirit has already been alluded to. References in the Fourth Gospel to this testimony are found chiefly in our Lord's last discourses. There more than once He refers to the coming of the Holy Spirit. "Whom," said He, "the Father will send in My name; He shall bear witness of Me". The words of our Lord concerning the testimony of the Holy Spirit were fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost and afterwards. Not for a single moment since that notable day has the Holy Spirit ceased to testify in the hearts of believers and through them that Jesus is the Son of God.

At the head of the second part of the outline which we are following is the word "Belief", which, where it exists, is induced by testimony.

## II.—Belief.

That the testimony recorded by John did produce belief is evident from the record. The Gospel records instances of individual belief as well as of the belief of companies. Individuals, such as Philip, Nathaniel, Nicodemus, the woman at the well, and others, we readily recall. Then there are such expressions as "Of the multitudes many believed". It is not a little remarkable to notice that there are also instances of unbelief recorded. It is what we should expect. In fact, if there were no instances of unbelief recorded in the Gospels, we would be disposed to suspect them to be forged. They would be untrue to nature. Nowhere to-day, not even in the smallest village in any country, does everybody believe. The candor of the writer is clearly shown in his recording these instances of unbelief. The strength of his position is greater also when one thinks about it, for he gives satisfactory explanations of the instances of unbelief. One of the most interesting lines of study in this entire outline is that of the development of belief and unbelief. This is seen both in individuals and in the body of disciples and of the opposition. The marvelous unity of this Gospel grows on one as the development of belief and unbelief is traced, of belief on the one hand in the disciples as they came better to know their Lord; of unbelief on the other in the Jews as they more and more clearly took their stand against Jesus.

Take one or two instances of development of belief in individuals. That of the woman at the well is one. At first her estimate of Jesus was expressed in the words, "Thou being a Jew". After brief conversation with Him she remarked, "I perceive that Thou art a prophet". A little later she suggested to her fellow-townsmen that He was the Christ. The nobleman, as reported near the end of the fourth chapter, believed the word that Jesus said when He told him on the way some distance from the house that his son lived. After his return and discovery that his son was convalescent, we read that the nobleman believed and all his house. The word "believed" in this last instance contained much more than it did when he referred to the road-side experience. So it should be with every believer. Every new day should fill the word "believe" more full of



meaning. The man born blind is another illustration of rapid development of belief. Reference to the ninth chapter will show that the first estimate by the blind man of Jesus was that He was a man. His words were, "A man that is called Jesus made clay and told me to go to the pool and wash". After he had heard the Pharisees discussing the claims of Jesus and His work and then was asked his opinion, he said, "He is a prophet". He continued to think as he listened to the discussion, and when occasion presented itself said, "If this man were not from God He could do nothing". After they had cast him out for faithfulness to mental and spiritual processes, Jesus Himself found him and said, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" He answered, "Who is He that I may believe?" Jesus said, "Thou hast both seen Him and He speaketh with thee". And he said, "I believe", and worshipped Him. Thus the blind man in a single day covered all the distance in the development of belief, from "A man that is called Jesus" to acceptance of this same man and worship of Him as the Son of God. To any reader whose eyes are not open to this glorious fact the same experience may come if, like the blind man, he has the willingness and humility to do what Jesus tells him to do and the courage to testify up to the measure of his conviction as Jesus more and more reveals Himself to his inner consciousness.

Of the secret of belief I shall not here speak particularly. It has been already in one way or another pointed out. Explanations of unbelief are fully given in the Gospel by John. I believe there is not a single case of unbelief in the world today of which the Gospel by John does not furnish an explanation. Let us note two of these. The first is found in the third chapter, also in the fifth. It is a bad life. "Men love darkness", says our Lord, "rather than light, because their deeds are evil; neither will they come to the light lest their deeds be reproved". The same is involved in John 5:42 and 44. "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in yourselves. How can ye believe, who receive glory one of another and the glory that cometh from the only God ye seek not?" It thus appears that in the case of some people it is absolutely true that they cannot believe. They cannot believe because they will not turn from their evil ways, just as a man cannot see the north when his face is set toward the south; just as one cannot go towards the east while he is progressing westward.

The second explanation of unbelief is given in 5:40. "Ye will not come to me that ye may have life". Here our Saviour indicates that the difficulty with these Jews was not that they did not know enough; that they had not evidence sufficient, but that they would not act; that they refused to do what it was clear they ought to do. This great Physician of souls here made a true diagnosis. He located the difficulty not in the intellect, but in the feelings and in the will. He said to them, "Your loves are wrong; the love of God is not in you. Your wills are wrong; ye will not come that ye may have life".

The results of belief and unbelief as indicated in the Gospel by John are the same as those manifesting themselves both before and since the time of our Lord. Take any cases of belief in the Old Testament times,

such as that of Moses, or David, or Daniel, and compare what resulted in those lives with what the Gospel by John declares to be the results of belief in God and you will be struck by the fact that the results are the same. Take the case of any believer to-day and you will find the joy and the peace and the power and other manifestations of belief to a greater or less degree present. In like manner we might speak of the results of unbelief. It thus appears that this Gospel sets forth truth for all time; that, in other words, it is eternal.

The duty of belief is set forth on every page of this Gospel. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it", quietly said the mother of Jesus to the servants at the marriage feast. "He that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life", is the solemn declaration of Jesus Himself. The evidences of His lordship are so many and so strong that the duty of obeying Him, which is what belief means, becomes very apparent.

One of the most striking passages setting forth the time of belief is in the Watershed Chapter (twelfth), thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth verses, "Walk in the light while ye have the light \* \* \* believe on the light that ye may become sons of the light".

We cannot emphasize too much the fact that the object of our belief is a person, even Jesus Christ the Son of God Himself and not a proposition or a series of propositions. Christianity is not mere acceptance of a set of doctrines as true. It is personal allegiance and warm, loving friendship. "Ye are My friends", our Saviour says, "if ye do the things which I command you. No longer (that is, not a moment after you do the things which I command you), do I call you servants. For the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth. But I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known unto you".

Let me emphasize, in closing this outline study, the distinction between explanation and evidence. Christianity bases its claims upon the latter and not upon the former, and this is scientific. Explanations come after evidence is acted upon. There are many students to-day who think that they are compromising their intellect if they accept as true that which they are unable to understand or explain. In no other department except that of religion, however, would they make this demand or have this suspicion. The man is mistaken when he says, I cannot believe. He has a misconception of what belief is. The fact is that belief has been appointed as the means by which salvation is procured, among other reasons because it is possible for everybody to believe; that is, to act on evidence. Jesus' command is, "Follow Me". This anybody can do. His next command is "Learn of Me". This anyone will do if he will obey the first command, "Follow Me". He does not say, "Be able to explain the doctrine of the divine Sonship". He does say, "Do what I command".

An exceptionally intelligent student who had come to accept the general views of Darwin, Huxley, and Spencer, and who regarded himself as an Agnostic, one day made up his mind that he would fairly examine the strongest presentation of Christian truth. He was advised to study the Gospel of John. He read it through from beginning to end, taking it

simply as a book, without examination of outside evidence of its genuineness. When he read it through he said: "The one of whom this book tells us is either the Saviour of the world, or he ought to be". Because of what the Book told him of Jesus Christ he was ready to heed the call of our Lord, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink".—"He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness". He followed the Light of the world and found Him to be his light and is now pointing others to his Saviour.

The above, related by Dr. Trumbull, is a challenge to every man who says, I do not know. For my part, I believe that the same prescription would unfailingly cure every Agnostic. Let him with the following prayer, thoughtfully and earnestly read the Gospel by John. "Oh, God, if there be a God, and if Jesus Christ be Thy Son and my Saviour, give me evidence of it and I will follow Him at any cost". I do not believe that any man determined to know and do the truth at all hazards can study the Gospel by John through without becoming a Christian.



## \* THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.

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The Gospel by John has a prologue and an epilogue. The epilogue constitutes the twenty-first chapter. The prologue includes the first eighteen verses of the first chapter. In our study of the first chapter we shall consider it in three parts. We shall first take the prologue, next the testimony of John the Baptist as found in verses nineteen to forty-two, and lastly we shall make a brief study of Philip and Nathanael.

### I. THE PROLOGUE.

What is the purpose of the prologue? One great scholar much quoted in these days says, that it was for the purpose of introducing Greek readers of Asia Minor to Jewish thought, the body of the Gospel being Jewish. There is a measure of truth in this, and yet the prologue itself must be recognized as Jewish in thought. The outstanding Greek idea which John takes up in the prologue and into which he pours more than any Greek ever dreamed of, is Logos. In brief, we may say that the purpose of the prologue is to introduce. It summarizes in a sense the entire Gospel, setting forth in miniature all that follows. There appears to be some ground for the opinion that this prelude is tripartate and in widening circles presents the motifs of the drama which follows and which describes the development of belief and unbelief. The purpose of the Gospel is to prove that Jesus is the incarnate Logos. This not by a doctrinal course of argument, but by a biography, "and in accordance with a plan which involves two ideas, testimony and answering belief." It requires no careful study of these verses to reveal not only the claims set forth that Jesus is the Son of God, but also the presence of testimony and its result.

Of the plan of the prologue one need not speak at length. As has been intimated, there appears to be a series of ever widening movements, precursors of the development which we find in the body of the Gospel. In connection with the plan of the prologue it might be well to dwell a moment on the manifest progression as therein found. This is most clearly observed in the three propositions found in verses one, fourteen, and eighteen. The Word was God; the Word became flesh; the Word reveals the Father. It is interesting to compare the movement in this prologue with the statement of the object of the writing of John found in 20: 30, 31. The order found there is, first, Jesus; second, the Christ; third, the Son of God. The exact

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\*This is the substance of President White's evening address, delivered at the First Conference on the Gospel of St. John, held October 27, 1903, at the First Baptist Church.

reverse of this order appears in the prologue. Why? Because in the prologue the claims are logical; whereas, in the twentieth chapter a summary of the historical movement as found in the Gospel is given. In the first part of the Gospel the disciples are represented as coming in contact with one Jesus, who, after a while is by them acknowledged to be the Christ, and at last is confessed even by the doubting Thomas to be the Son of God. In connection with those three propositions found in verses one, fourteen and eighteen, may I give the following, quoted from Gomorus, who represents Jesus as saying—

“I am what I was: that is God.

I was not what I am: that is man.

I am now both God and man”.

## II. TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

[See preceding address.]

## III. PHILIP AND NATHANAEL.

In these two men we have completed one half of the apostolic college. Six of the twelve apostles are found coming to Jesus in this first chapter of John. Jesus, it is said, found Philip (v. 43) and Philip found Nathanael (v. 54). The words of verse forty-five suggest enthusiasm on the part of Philip in announcing to Nathanael the Messiah. Think of him as seeing Nathanael at a distance, perhaps on the other side of a wide street, or on the opposite side of a field, and running towards him crying, “Oh, Nathanael, we have found Him of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph”. I think Philip and Nathanael had been talking over matters relating to the coming of the Messiah and were looking for Him. People who are looking are those who usually find. The answer of Nathanael put in the form of a question, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” did not dampen the ardor of Philip. He was unable to answer the objection which Nathanael raised, but he was sure that in spite of the objection he had found the Messiah. He did the wise thing. He did not argue, but said, “Come and see for yourself”. Nathanael’s response to this invitation of Philip is a revelation of his true character. He was an honest, earnest inquirer. He was one who was not to be turned aside from investigation by even a serious objection. He would give more weight to the testimony of his friend than to a theoretic difficulty. Would that there were more of the spirit of Nathanael in our day.

There are three things which in closing I wish to say about these words “Come and see”. The first is that Christianity invites investigation. Not only is it willing to have the most thorough examination of its claims made, but it greatly desires just this thing. Its policy is not to ignore or dodge any difficulty. On its forefront are written the words “Come and see.”

The Bible invites investigation. Throw all the light possible on its pages. The founder of Christianity invites investigation. His claims, His

character, His career, all about Him He would have you investigate most carefully. The work of Christianity in the world invites investigation. It says, let on all the light possible.

A second fact about Christianity is that it stimulates investigation. It presents claims which make us think. We should never forget that the modern university with all that it involves is the daughter of Christianity. May the daughter never deny her mother. The Bible is acknowledged by the most eminent thinkers to be the greatest stimulus to human thought. No book in all the world's history has done for the human intellect in the way of stimulus what the Bible has done. The paradoxes which are presented in the Bible are calculated to stimulate thought. The superficial thinker rejects the Bible as untrue because it has what he calls so many contradictions. These are only apparent and dissolve on closer investigation. An illustration of this we find in this question of Nathanael to Philip, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" The prophets, as Nathanael and Philip knew, had declared that the Messiah should come from Bethlehem of Judea. It seemed impossible to believe that what Philip said was true, and yet a wider synthesis of facts was all that was needed in order to make it manifest that both were true. By the mere claim which Philip made Nathanael was stimulated to investigate.

This leads us to the third and last remark that Christianity stands the test of investigation. When Nathanael went to see he found things as Philip had represented them. Everyone since that has gone to see in the same earnest manner has had the same experience. Is it not a remarkable fact that no one who has thoroughly investigated Christianity and acted upon the command of our Lord "Follow Me" has returned to tell the world that there is nothing in His claims? Is there anyone here who does not know that Christ is the Son of God? My word to such an one is "Come and see." You are challenged to do so by the very claims which are made by those about you whom you ought to trust. Philip had never deceived Nathanael. There are friends of yours who have always told you the truth. Not a single time have they led you astray. They with all the enthusiasm possessed by Philip on this memorable day when he called to Nathanael, declare that they have found the Messiah. Will you not prove yourself to be equally as earnest and honest as Nathanael and come and see even though great difficulties present themselves to you? If you will do so, you will know that He is what He claims to be. He will give you evidence as He gave Nathanael that He knows you through and through. Will you please notice that this was what convinced Nathanael. When Jesus saw him coming He said to him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" And when Nathanael asked Him, "How did you come to know me?" He said, "I saw thee under the fig tree before Philip called thee". He was doubtless in meditation and prayer. Probably asking God to indicate to him the Messiah about whom John had been preaching and to give him indisputable evidence when he should see Him. His prayer was answered in an unexpected way. At once he confessed, "Thou art the Son of God; thou art King of Israel". From that day forth Nathanael followed Jesus and the words of our Lord to him



proved true, "Thou shalt see greater things than these". Every day in the true Christian's life new evidences come to him that Jesus is what He claims to be. Limitless vistas open before him and he goes on a way of ever increasing wonder. Will not every hearer accept the statement at the beginning of this book, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and act upon it? By this means, great doubter though you may be, you will inevitably come to the place as Thomas did where in the presence of indisputable evidence, you will cry, "My Lord, and my God".

## \* THE PROLOGUE OF JOHN.

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There are many points of entrance into a study of this opening section of John's Gospel.

One broad avenue of approach to its meaning is a careful survey of its *personnel*. Here stands a notable company, all so disposed within its far-spreading area of thought that each one finds ample room. No one but will well repay a close attention.

Take the task of arranging and naming and estimating the impressive array: God, the Father; the Word, the Son, the Incarnate; Believers and an Unreceptive World; Moses and John the Baptist.

From among these, bring forward to the foreground the figure undoubtedly designed by the author to stand preeminent within the group—Jesus Christ. Notice His designation: He is the Only-Begotten, the Word, the Eternal, the Medium of Creation, the Light, the Life of all the World. He has a world-embracing mission, is dowered with a glory as of God, bears within His life and being a full and blessed freightage of grace and truth, can secure to all believers the proper title of children in the household of God, and from His everlasting home in the Father's bosom can bring forth abounding revelations of the being of the Infinite and Unseen. All this opens before one's eye as he heeds the persons filing into view in this brief paragraph.

Another open highway into a study of the prologue is its *action*. Here is a wonderful drama, with mighty actors, engaged in a stupendous enterprise. There are impressive hints of an eternal companionship of Father and Son; of the outgoings of an infinite energy and skill in the creation of all existing things; of an awful and far-spread alienation between persons who should have remained genially at one; of a gracious, world-encircling personal illumination; of the strangely variant response of unbelievers and believers; of an amazing birth from God through Christ of all receptive hearts into filial kinship with God; and of clusters of events fit to mark world-eras in the ministries of Moses and John. Surely here are movements of the most vital and majestic type.

But, among all these living scenes one is central: the Word becoming Flesh. Here is mystery beyond all doubt. But here is verity beyond denial. And here pure glory is radiant. He who abides eternally with God, He who brings a universe into ordered life, He who brings life to all who see, He, the Only-Begotten, becomes Flesh that there may come to

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\* Summary of address delivered at the First Conference, held at the First Baptist Church, October 21, 1903.

man from the eternal source of Truth all the fullness of infinite Grace. Here is a transaction fit to summon every seeing eye in all the universe to give thoughtful, reverent heed.

And other ways of easy entrance to this gateway of the Gospel of John lie in easy view. Let heedful souls find and map out every one.

Once a man has broken into the rich interior of this short paragraph, he is impressed with its arrangement of material in *pairs*. Word and God, Son and Father, Word and Flesh, Light and Darkness, Being and Becoming, Faith and Birth, Repentance and Belief, Grace and Truth. Here are set together infinite contradictions, contrasts, balancings, complements, harmonies, fellowships.

Tremendous questions surge into a student's mind. How are the Word and God related inherently and eternally? What deeps lie in Sonship and Fatherhood in Deity? How do Word and God cooperate in creation? What, quite precisely, are the author's views of Darkness? How do Faith in the believer and Birth from God consort, when people "become" sons of God? Exactly how does "witness bearing" corroborate "light"? How do Grace and Truth differ? and how do they combine in "Glory"? Here are near and obvious queries, and any one of them may sober anyone.

And yet all these astounding coefficients lie together in this prologue in easy fellowship, without any sign of discord or uneasiness.

Indeed, they truly unify. Though the colors vary strikingly, they evidently and beautifully blend. After all, the theme is one, the aim is one, the effect is one. Here is a characteristic marvel, and herein the prologue is like the Gospel as a whole. It is a living unity. Gospel and prologue are fluid, not solid. All its elements interplay. The whole of it is everywhere. The pressure of the entire paragraph pulses and surges in every phrase. To state the same truth in another way, its structure is germinal. Each sentence is like a living cell; it alone is able to produce the whole. The life of all is in each part. Or once again, it is like a diamond with many facets, through each of which streams all the splendor in all the gem. So wonderful is its unity. Prologue and Gospel are pan-centric. The center of gravity is everywhere. It is all central. Every sentence is a radius. Every affirmation is an orb. Its aspects vary as might vary the different surfaces of a cube, when overlaid with varying hues. Every surface presents the total cube. Such is the composition of this section. All its factors fuse.

And they merge in the Incarnate Word. Here is all the manifoldness, all the abundance, all the unity, all the simplicity that flash upon the open eye at this magnetic gateway to the Gospel of John. In Him is Eternal Deity, creative energy, effulgent light, primal lordship, all radiance of glory, full tides of Grace and Truth. All verity and harmony reside in Him. In Him, as set forth here, all the deep, disturbing queryings, which the various factors of the prologue instigate, become tranquilized.

The "World" is His. He dominates its "Darkness". He radiates its "Light". In His full blendings of full Grace and Truth full "Glory" stands revealed.



Here is the central reality and the consummate wonder of this prologue. Here play all the lasting energies of this world's life. And here those forces find their rest. How is this so swiftly and deftly and simply achieved?

This is *the* task of any earnest and penetrating student of this introductory masterpiece in the matchless Gospel of John. But this is no task for a novice, or a man in any impatient haste. It is a task for a master and for a life-time.

One broad assertion may be made at the start. He who fathoms this prologue will be a man of one sole aim. He will be seeking with all his eyes to find out its conception of *personality*.

Within this simple thought range all the areas and slumber all the deeps which this paragraph contains. The key to unlock all the mystery of Word and God, of Father and Son, of Grace and Truth, of Word and Flesh, of Faith and Birth, of Darkness and Light, and of the infinite act of creation lies fully fitted in just one deep, true glance into the mighty energies and awful antagonisms and blissful fellowships that lie inherent in the qualities and capacities of beings who are persons, *i. e.*, beings who are responsible and free. The forces that play across the face of this prologue are persons. They are beings who know and choose and judge. They can discern and approve and desire. They can also detect and decline. They are inherently and freely independent. And they are inherently and freely interlocked. They stand in individual integrity. And they stand in social fraternity. They may be alienated. They may be reconciled. They may be deadened. They may be quickened. They may freely stray in darkness. And they may freely range in light. They may clarify, or they may eclipse their intelligence. They may sully or they may purify their joy. They are persons.

Among them all stands, at the focus of this paragraph, and at the focus of the history of the world, the Incarnate Word, the Christ, the Son of God. Now mark what is said of Him.

He is the Word. Heed that. He became Flesh. Ponder here. He dwelt among us. Peer into that. He was radiant with Glory. If you really have at your command a true intelligence, *use* it here. This Glory was as of the Only-Begotten. Think what this does verily mean. The Only-Begotten of the Father. How far do you really see into the essential meaning of this word in this place? Full of Grace and Truth. Now you have struck the center. Do you know it? This (the blended Grace and Truth) is the Glory. This besseems the "Father". This is what radiates from the "Only-Begotten". This streams from the "Flesh". This hails from the "Word". And this is the Word who was "with God", who "was God", through whom everything "came into being". This Word was the "Life" which was the "Light", which irradiated all mankind. It was He in whom certain men "believed". It was through Him that they became "Sons of God". It was He whom divers other men did not "receive". It is He who "is in the Father's bosom". It is He who "declares" the "invisible" God. And He is Jesus Christ.

Now here are overwhelming affirmations. But they are splendidly simple. They all center in that blending of Grace and Truth. And the blending of the unmixed energies of eternal Grace and Truth form the deep and priceless verity, the final and full quintessence of deathless, divine personality. This is the "Glory" of Christ. This is the "Word". In this free range are all the vitality and verity and joy of the copartnership of Word and God, of Father and Son. It is an infinite interplay of Truth and Grace.

Herein each is conscious of the solid and unvarying reality of His own being in the exhaustless upspringing of His self respect, while also equally conscious of a full and joyful outflow toward the other in the exhaustless tide of His self-devotion. Truth, the blessed consciousness of the absolute reality of Himself; Grace, the blessed, free outpouring toward another—here is all the "Glory" of God, all the eternal companionship of Father and Son. This in the unmixed purity of the spirit life, and in the unlimited fullness of the Transcendent One is personality in blessed archetype. It is the unencumbered, unhindered, untiring and unmeasured interplay of Grace and Truth.

The revelation of this is "Light". The glad welcome of this is "Belief". The potent engendering of this by God through Christ is the first inbreathing of sonship. And herein rests all basis for pure, abiding fellowship, whether with brother man, or Christ, or the Infinite God. Here is personality in all its immortal nature, and ground, and range, and blessedness. Here are the deeps of the fellowship in Deity. Here are the deeps of the comradeship of Word and Flesh. Here is the definition of Light. This is Life. Here is the ambient tide in which rests so peacefully the divinely fashioned keel of human faith. And here, as with the Only-Begotten in the Father's bosom, is the ultimate, and complete, and quiet, and joyful haven of human rest. So deep, and strong, and clear is the infinite love that offers to our wondering eye its deeps in the prologue to the Gospel of John.

## \* JOHN THE BAPTIST AND HIS GOSPEL.

(ST. JOHN 1:19-37.)

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"There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John". Thus the history of Christianity, as distinguished from that of Israel, begins—at least in the Fourth Gospel. The synoptic narrative takes the same point of departure. "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ", says Mark—"John the Baptizer came in the wilderness, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins". It was in the person of John the Baptist that Christianity emerged into history, and by him the foundations of the Christian church were begun. The author of *Ecce Homo* struck a true note in his opening sentence: "The Christian Church sprang from a movement that was not begun by Christ".

The student of the Gospel narrative, his eye fixed upon one central figure, may easily overlook the large significance of the person and work of John. One indication of this significance is the relative space given to this subject. Take the 150 sections into which the four-fold Gospel has been divided for the purpose of historical interpretation, 23 of them treat of, or have reference to John. Again, in the book of Acts, in at least six passages his ministry or his teaching comes distinctly into view. He is especially prominent in the Fourth Gospel. In that profoundest of the New Testament books there is a distinct recognition of the fact that this man and his message must be studied if the redemptive work of Christ and the beginnings of Christianity are to be understood.

"Sent from God", says the record. Every man who fills a place in history and renders distinguished service to his generation is in a certain true sense "sent of God", but the word here means more. The reference is not to the fact that John belonged to the priesthood, and had the consecrated blood of Aaron in his veins. Rather that he was sent as a *prophet* is sent, bearing a message supernaturally given, and thus invested with an authority which no personal endowment, no sacred lineage, no human institution, ecclesiastical or civil, could confer. Such was the claim that John put forward for himself, and such the claim that Christ afterwards was distinctly understood to put forward for him. The Jewish hierarchy recognized what that claim to prophetic inspiration and authority meant, and on that issue they deliberately and finally rejected him.

Once for all let us discard that theory which has contributed in so many ways to a misunderstanding of the origin of Christianity, namely, that John belonged to the old dispensation rather than the new. Dr. Schaff

\* Delivered at the First Conference, held at the First Baptist Church, October 21, 1903.



styles him "the representative of the ancient preparatory economy", and in this sense the author of a recent hand-book on John the Baptist chooses as its title, "The Last of the Prophets". This is to forget that the ministry of John, lasting, we may believe, nearly three years, was in large part contemporaneous with that of Jesus,—that for nearly a year, perhaps more, they were actively engaged in teaching at no great distance from each other; that both John and Jesus baptized, and both preached essentially the same gospel—that John, as truly as Peter, or Andrew, or John the Apostle, was a disciple and a servant of Christ. We are told, by way of objection, that John was not one of the members of the kingdom, that Christ Himself expressly excludes him from that number. But it was because the kingdom had not come. John did not live to see the ascension, and the advent of the Spirit; he could not be included among those who should not taste of death till they should see the kingdom of God (Lk. 9:27); but no one can accept the historicity of the Fourth Gospel and consistently deny to John a place among the ministers of the new covenant. Luke also expressly says, "he preached the gospel unto the people" (3:18). His proper place is in that new order of the world that we call Christian. ✓

Who may fitly describe this great man—great in every true, high sense? His picture—the picture of the external man—is familiar, but the Gospels give us no biography, no account of his education, of his life till manhood, alternating between the temple and the wilderness. Only a few of his sayings are recorded; he transmitted no system of doctrine; the society which he formed was not finally to bear his name or acknowledge his leadership. Still there is no mistaking the mental and moral stature of this sublime man, who has not yet come to his own in history, to whom even Keim's splendid tribute has done only partial justice.

His greatness grows with time. As Edersheim says: "It is not easy to speak of him in moderate language. Above all, it is his generosity and his unselfishness and absolute self-abnegation which impresses us. In a generation pre-eminently self-righteous, vain-glorious and self-seeking, when even on the last journey to Jerusalem the two disciples nearest to Christ could only think of pre-eminence of place in the kingdom, and when in the near prospect of suffering a Peter could ask the Master, 'What shall we have,?' when even at the last meal the disciples marred the solemn music of this farewell by the discord of their wrangle about the order of rank, \* \* \* the Baptist stands alone in his life and in his death—absolutely self-forgetful".

He had, what is so rarely found, self-knowledge, a thorough understanding of himself and his vocation. And this suggests one of the lessons to be learned from his life. He was conscious of a prophetic task, and had pondered Old Testament prophecy until its thought and spirit had passed into his very life. He perceived that the coming of the Messiah for the deliverance of Israel was conditioned, that it depended in part upon the preparation to receive Him which the Israelite community itself should make. The theocracy must make ready for the coming of its King; there must be a spiritual preparation, a revival of faith and obedience. "Come out from

among them and be ye separate". Now John, as Ewald has said, "recognized the Divine call as directed in the first instance to himself". *He* was the nearest person he could speak to. Not waiting for the nation, not even waiting for the appearance of the Elijah who was to precede the Messiah, he bowed his own soul before God, and *there* made ready for the King. Not dreaming that he himself was that Elijah, he passed into the wilderness and became Elijah—the Elijah that was to come. Thus is it, or may it be with us all. It is our ideals that shape our destiny.

"The thing we long for, that we are."

The power with which he brought his message to bear upon his generation may be measured by its effect. The trumpet blast of his voice shook the land. It awoke a reformation, a revival of spiritual life. Herod Antipas, as well as the rulers at Jerusalem, feared him. For, as Josephus relates, "the people were wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement by his words", and "seemed ready to do anything that he might advise". Even during his imprisonment he had intercourse with his followers. For not less than three years, we suppose, perhaps longer, he preached, taught, gathered a body of disciples, until his mission was accomplished, and he had, in the phrase of scripture, made ready for the Lord "a prepared people".

That John preached a gospel we have already shown. We are now to inquire, what was that gospel? The answer will be three-fold:

- I. He preached a Christ—a personal Lord and Savior.
- II. He preached the Kingdom of God.
- III. He preached a Gospel of Righteousness.

I. *John preached a Christ, a personal Lord and Savior.* The modern reader of the Gospels takes this as a matter of course, having in mind that the whole Jewish people were in an attitude of expectation. The literature of that age enables us measurably to appreciate the tremendous import of the Messianic hope—the courage, the recuperative energy, the idealized imperialism that were born of it. But that which we are accustomed to designate the Messianic hope was the expectation of a kingdom rather than of a king. The kingdom was to be restored to Israel. The Jew was to be ruler of the world. A monarchy, a throne, a king of the Davidic line, these were matters of course, but it was the kingdom that loomed large in popular thought. In the compilation known as the "Sibylline Oracles" there are certain portions manifestly of Jewish origin, which are on good grounds considered at least a century older than John the Baptist. In their delineation of the future power and glory of Israel, they scarcely more than allude to the Messiah, the King who is to inaugurate the new era. The poet's eye is not fixed upon a person. In the Book of Enoch, it is true, and in the Psalms of Solomon, that personal figure is more prominent. But for the most part the watchword of the Pharisees was not the Messiah, it was *Mal-kuth*, the kingdom, and this was equally the case with the people at large.

John preached the Kingdom of God, but the distinctive feature of his message was the teaching concerning a personal King and Savior. He not

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only kindled anew the national hope, he interpreted it and spiritualized it. He turned all eyes upon the Coming One. This supreme thought of a unique person as the realization in Himself of the nation's long deferred hope, was not new; it was at least as old as Isaiah, but it was for that age vague and obscure, and practically of slight import. John revived it. "What you have to do with", he warned rulers and people alike, "is not the matter of a new polity, a reconstructed civic and social order; the King is coming, a King of absolute righteousness, with power to destroy as well as to save. Your reckoning is not with the kingdom, but with Him."

Of the genesis of this phase of his gospel we are not told, nor when it was that he first accepted Jesus of Nazareth as his Lord and Savior. No record remains of the day when for the first time he believed on the Nazarene as the Lord's Anointed, whose way he was commissioned to prepare. But surely that was one of the decisive days of history when the Judean prophet beheld in Jesus the Divine One, and had vision, however dim, of the glory of the coming of the Lord. How John first discovered Him in His true character—whether it was discovery, or by what is in scripture termed revelation, we are not called upon to decide.

"Who shall draw the mystic line,  
Which is human, which divine?"

He was at all events distinctly enabled to discern in the lowly man of Nazareth the world's hope, or in the language of his favorite prophet, to "see the King in his beauty". To the multitude the hero of the hour, the great man, was John, not Jesus. But John saw and believed. {

It is common to disparage this great act of faith. Because that faith came in the course of the following year to be clouded by doubt, it is considered no wise decisive. The inquiry sent from the prison, "Art thou He that shall come", in the opinion of Professor Gilbert and others, shows that John had not fully accepted Jesus as the Messiah. But it is surely a false principle to interpret his whole past career by that temporary and partial eclipse of faith. John's problem, let us remember, was the same as that of the apostles themselves. If Jesus be truly the Messiah, why does He content himself with the role of a teacher and a healer of diseases; where are the signs from heaven, glorious displays of overawing power? Where is "the days of vengeance of our God", distinctly predicted by the prophets as the Messiah's day? It was a signal proof of John's faith that he brought his great doubt to the Master himself, looked for the answer to Him who alone could give it.

"Did never thorns thy path beset?  
Beware,—be not deceived;  
He who has never doubted yet,  
Has never yet believed".

These words of a Christian poet are often perverted or misapplied; but they have in them a truth. To quote an anonymous writer: "So little inconsistent with a habit of intelligent faith are such transient invasions of



doubt, or such diminished perceptions of the evidence of truth, that it may even be said that it is only those who have in some measure experienced them who can be said in the highest sense to believe at all".

Even Keim, whose insight into the facts of Christian experience is not always the profoundest, says of John's procedure at this crisis: "From his dungeon, where all vision was shut out, John acknowledges his own subjection to the person of Jesus".

John's message in the wilderness was not so much to tell what the Kingdom should be, as who He should be—"he that cometh after me". After the baptism he was able authoritatively to identify Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. Still later, having had, as we may believe, opportunity for personal intercourse with Jesus, he could teach that fuller, richer gospel of which we have reminiscences from the pen of the fourth evangelist. It is hardly to be questioned, I take it, that on the banks of the Jordan, after, if not before the baptism and temptation, there were interviews which afforded John a nearer personal acquaintance with his Master and a better understanding of the scriptures concerning Him.

Taking a general view of both the earlier and the later ministry, John's teaching concerning the person and office of Christ concentrated itself upon the following particulars:

1. He was the Anointed King of Israel—the Son of God.
2. He had had a pre-existence; he was from heaven.
3. He was to rule with justice.
4. He was to be a Savior.
5. He was to bestow the Holy Spirit.

Our space will not allow us to discuss these separately at length. As to the term Son of God, quoted from the Baptist's teaching in the single passage (John 1:34), "I have seen and borne witness that this is the Son of God", it is difficult to determine the precise content. For us now to recover the Baptist's Christology, whether that of the earlier, or of the latter stage of his ministry, is manifestly impossible. As it came from John's lips did it stand for the proper deity of Christ, as was the case not many years later in the early church? Even now, after the Christian thought of nineteen centuries, there is scarcely a term in theology more difficult to define. The faithful interpreter of Scripture will not attempt to read into John's language the dogmatic distinctions of a later orthodoxy. John did not preach in the wilderness, or teach to his disciples, the clauses of the Athanasian creed. They would have been incomprehensible to him, even had it been possible to translate them into the Hebrew of his day. The *Quicunque vult*,—that whoever will be saved must "worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity", "neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance", we do not suppose John believed or preached. But he does appear, in designating Jesus the Son of God, to have expressed a belief in his unique divinity, and to have exalted Him above all other humanity. According to Stanton ("The Jewish and Christian Messiah", p. 147) it is very doubtful whether the Jews in pre-Christian times ever used the term Son of

God of the Messiah. John's testimony then marks a distinct advance in the Messianic idea.

The remarkable saying in which John attributes pre-existence to the Messiah is (in substance) given twice in the chapter before us: John 1: 15, 29, "He that cometh after me hath been before me, for He was before me". That John attributed pre-existence to the Messiah need not surprise us, considering that the doctrine had already found distinct expression in the Judaistic literature of the first pre-Christian century. In the Similitudes of Enoch it is said of the Son of Man: "Before the sun and the signs were created, before the stars of the heaven were made, His name was named before the Lord of Spirits"; "He has been chosen and hidden before Him before the creation of the world and for evermore". "The Elect One standeth before the Lord of Spirits; and His glory is for ever and ever, and His might unto all generations". As Mr. Charles, in his edition of the Book of Enoch, has shown, "Son of Man" and "Elect One" are distinct designations of the personal Messiah; he says further: the "actual pre-existence of the Son of Man is only in keeping with His other attributes of universal dominion and unlimited judicial authority".

But the visions of Daniel belong to a still earlier date. In Dan. 7: 13, 14 we read: "I saw in the night visions, and behold there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and they came even to the ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed". Here, as Schürer says: "The doctrine of the Messiah's pre-existence is already stated, for it is self-evident that He who comes down from heaven was before in heaven".

The Messiah was to come *with judgment*, and this was to be not punitive merely, but separative as well. The ax brought to the tree, and the shovel to winnow grain, are His figures,—and fire. "He shall baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire"; "the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire", so reads the synoptic passage. Here two converging lines of prophetic symbolism meet and blend. There is a fire of holiness and a fire of wrath. In John's first use of the symbol, fire denotes the same divine principle as the Holy Spirit; in the latter part of the passage it is the fire of wrath. "John connects the baptism of fire and the judgment of fire without discrimination in time just as the Old Testament prophets were accustomed to do". Thus Isaiah, for instance, views the Messiah's advent as "the year of Jehovah's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God".

The Messiah was to be a *Savior*,—a *Savior from sin*. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world". That John took his figure of the lamb from the 53rd chapter of Isaiah is now admitted by the great majority of interpreters. Whether this be the case or not, it nevertheless remains true that the lamb in the religious vocabulary of the Jews was a symbol of expiatory sacrifice. Still, this utterance attributed to John is, if we consider when it was uttered, startling enough. Can he so early

have seized upon the Christian conception of an atonement made in the person of the Savior, which even the apostles failed to apprehend until after that atonement had actually taken place? It is not surprising that many scholars are inclined to question the literal correctness of the passage as it stands. Köhler is one who maintains the genuineness of the Fourth Gospel and its historicity in general; he holds, however, that the words "who taketh away the sin of the world" are not the Baptist's own, but an explanatory addition of the evangelist writing long afterwards, when the idea of the atonement had become inseparably connected in Christian thought with the Savior's death on the cross. But I cannot see that historical probability is altogether against the saying just as we have it. John the Baptist was deeply read in Isaiah, and Isaiah had shown that the Servant of Jehovah, (whether an ideal or an actual person) must suffer. Why may not John, on his mount of spiritual vision far above all his contemporaries, have had some glimpses, however obscure, of a mysterious tragedy of suffering that should expiate the guilt of human sin and reconcile the world to God?

Acts 1:5

John's doctrine of the Messiah reaches its climax in the saying, Jo. 1 : 33 : Christ is "*He that baptizeth in the Holy Spirit*". All four of the gospels report this saying. It seems indeed to be the keystone of his soteriology. Our Lord himself repeated it in the last interview with his disciples on the mount of ascension, and Peter quotes it (in the form given it by Jesus) to the church at Jerusalem (Acts 11 : 16). It is remarkable that these are the only passages in the New Testament where the baptism in, or with the Holy Spirit is spoken of, with the possible exception of 1 Cor. 12 : 13. The conception of the bestowment of the Holy Spirit as a baptism has had special prominence in recent theological and devotional literature. It would appear to have originated with John.

In that phrase he seems to have embodied his highest conception of Christ's saving work. By this gift, this sovereign act, Christ was to be the founder of the new covenant, and the progenitor of a new race. Harnack is strangely superficial in his view that John's message did not go beyond the lines of repentance. Keim is here the truer interpreter, and penetrates to the inner secret of the Baptist's gospel. "John", he says, "is no stranger to the notion of grace". "The spiritual stars of the kingdom of God now approaching were, for John, forgiveness of sins, and the Spirit of God". Keim practically discards the Fourth Gospel, and therefore comes to this conclusion on the sole authority of the synoptic narrative. But the Fourth Gospel sets the Baptist's teaching concerning Christ as the bearer and the giver of the Spirit in bold relief. May it not have been due in part to his earlier teacher that this evangelist distinguishes the gospel period as one during which, as he says, "the Spirit was not yet given", and that he, more fully than the others, records Christ's own teaching concerning the future advent of the Spirit?

It has been mentioned above that our Lord Himself in His promise of the Spirit's coming borrowed John the Baptist's figurative phrase, "baptized with the Holy Spirit". In some early copies of Luke the Lord's Prayer



given in the eleventh chapter had as the second petition, "May thy Holy Spirit come upon us and purify us", instead of "Thy kingdom come", or, "Thy will be done". Christ's teaching on that occasion was given, as Luke mentions, in response to His disciples' request, "Teach us to pray, even as John taught his disciples". It is quite credible that here Jesus quoted, and gave His sanction to a petition which had already been taught by John. In any case the coincidence is an interesting one, and may again raise the question whether John's preaching was so non-Christian as it is commonly represented.

II. *John preached the Kingdom of God.* "And in those days came John the Baptist saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt. 3:1, 2). Prophets had foretold the founding of a kingdom, and this, as we have seen, had become the goal of the Messianic hope. John's doctrine of the kingdom is not even outlined in the gospels. Probably it remained undeveloped, as was the case with the apostles until after the advent of the Spirit. It is sufficiently clear, however, to what general type it belonged. There are at least three prominent types of the kingdom idea which have been widely influential in history and in Christian theology.

1. That of an ecclesiastical state. This was the thoroughly political idea that dominated Judaism.

2. The idea of a universal church, an ecclesiastical organization including all redeemed souls—the Roman Catholic idea at its best.

3. The kingdom as an ethical principle—the law of love made operative in human society—an idea strongly emphasized in the theology of Ritschl.

No one of these quite answers to the New Testament idea, or, as I understand it, to the teaching of Jesus. In the New Testament it is the eschatological aspect that predominates. It exists on the earth, but it reaches into the world beyond, and belongs chiefly to an order of things not seen or temporal. It is the new spiritual fellowship, the new moral order, introduced into the world by Christ—not an ecclesiastical state, not a world-church, not an ethical system or society permeated by ethical ideas,—but a new spiritually organized life. As it now exists on earth it is the totality of the Christian life as opposed to the world's sin.

John's idea of the kingdom appears rather to have conformed to the latter type. It was not the distinctive note of his teaching, and he did not make it his working idea. It is not unlikely that the Isaiah doctrine of "the remnant", which afterwards impressed itself upon the thought of the apostle Paul, had its influence in determining John's conception of the kingdom. The prophetic manifesto of the Baptist's mission, attributed by Luke to the angel Gabriel, declares that he is to make ready for Jehovah "a prepared people". The word for people is *laos*, properly denoting not a mere multitude or aggregate of individuals, but a race or nation. John seems not to have expected the existing Israel to be that elect race; there must be gathered a spiritual Israel, who should hear the prophetic call, "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate", and who should thus constitute "the remnant".

Accordingly he came not only to preach and to teach, but to baptize. The Gospels and Josephus are not far apart in their interpretation of this characteristic function of his ministry. In both these sources John's rite of baptism is viewed as an associative act. Furthermore, the New Testament writers plainly view it as initiatory, marking one's entrance not merely upon a new life, but into a new community. On this point Calvin took issue with the Roman Catholic theology which had denied to the Johannine ordinance the essential significance of Christian baptism. The Council of Trent subsequently reaffirmed emphatically the Catholic position, declaring in their decree: "If any one affirms that the baptism of John had the same force as the baptism of Christ, let him be anathema". We will risk the anathema and side with Calvin.

The rite as John administered it had a double significance. Regarded as the act of the person submitting to it, it was symbolically declarative of repentance toward God and of faith in the Messiah. On the part of the administrator, on the other hand, it was intended to declare that the person baptized had fulfilled the requisite conditions and was now inducted into the new fellowship or society.

Thus John's doctrine of the kingdom concentrated itself upon the formation of the new covenant-community which was to supersede the old theocracy. His gospel, his ministry as a teacher, lay in part along this line. He was to gather and instruct a body of disciples which should become a nucleus of the Christian kingdom and church. That body or sect of disciples was not itself the church, it was not the kingdom, but it was a religious fellowship or society in which the new kingdom first took a partially organized form. Its members constituted a quasi-sect, known as the disciples of John. They followed certain teachings and observances. Those of them who did not fully carry out the instructions of their master and identify themselves with the Christian church remained long afterwards a separate Jewish sect, traces of whose existence still remain in the East.

But, as already said, John's thought was less of the kingdom than of the King—a personal Deliverer. This was the case also with Peter and Paul, and with John the apostle. In this respect do they not remain a lesson and a law to us? With the kingdom as a regulative idea and as a working principle we have less to do, much more with our personal relations to Christ and His church.

III. *A Gospel of Righteousness.* "John came unto you in the way of righteousness", said our Lord to the Jewish leaders in the temple,—“John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye did not believe him and repent” (Matt. 21 : 32). Christ here sets the Forerunner's teaching not in opposition to, but in line with His own. For righteousness with John was not legalism. This we must insist upon, despite eminent authorities to the contrary.

In the Expositor's Greek Testament, Dr. A. B. Bruce, contrasting John and Jesus, says, "The message of the one was legal, the other evangelic". "The Baptist had a passion for righteousness, yet his conception of righteousness was narrow, severe, legal". And in his comment on the words of

Christ cited above, "John came unto you in the way of righteousness", he explains them as meaning, "he cultivated legal piety like yourselves". We shall not go to the other extreme and say with Dr. Fairbairn, in his "*Studies in the Life of Christ*", that John "was a sort of personified revolt against the law, written and oral", reviving "the ancient conflict of his order against the ritualism of the temple and the legalism of the schools". But it is surely a sheer perversion of the record to put John's teaching in opposition, or even in antithesis to that of Christ. It was Jesus, not John, who said, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven". It was not John, but Jesus, who said, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law until all things shall be accomplished". The essence of legalism consists in substituting the outward form for the inward reality. It is satisfied with the external. It is only a nominal, not a real obedience. Thus it is not righteousness at all, it is literalism, the letter that killeth, not the spirit, that inward reality without which there can be no true normal life.

John's message of righteousness was not legalism; on the other hand it was not righteousness with the idea of law left out. It implied, as in scripture it always implies when applied to human life and conduct, conformity to a standard of duty, obedience to moral law. It describes personal life as related to a government, not necessarily to an expressed rule, but always to a moral order. The phrase "conformity to truth" is not sufficient to define it; it is conformity to imperative truth. It implies submission to authority, to some ruling will. There have been times when it would have been quite superfluous to maintain that righteousness in the Christian vocabulary carries with it the idea of obedience, so obvious and distinct is the thought of the New Testament writers on that point. But now the author of "*Pro Christo et Ecclesia*" is quoted as declaring: "Obedience is not a Christian idea, it is an anti-Christian idea, against which our Lord most strenuously set His face", and a noted German theologian assures us that "Paul is the great discoverer of the fact that God and law are mutually exclusive".

We have already emphasized the testimony of the four evangelists that John preached a gospel of grace—of One who was to take away guilt and to bestow the Spirit of life and power. It was at the same time a gospel of ethical righteousness—of obedience. According to the angelic prediction, he was to turn "the disobedient to walk in the wisdom of the righteous" (Luke 1:17). The Messiah was to be Savior, none the less was He to be Lord and King. The majesty and the justice of the divine government were to be disclosed in His person. The voice of prophecy had already declared, "A king shall rule in righteousness"; "He shall judge Thy people with righteousness". Hence the doctrine of a divine retribution upon the unrepentant was not omitted from John's message to Israel, and, like Paul, he "reasoned of righteousness, of temperance, and of the judgment to come".

His conception of the kingdom, as we have already observed, appears to have remained undeveloped. But it was certainly not that pitiful anomaly made prominent in much of the popular theology today, a kingdom without government, a conception of the kingdom of Christ in which sovereignty



is unnecessary, which has no subjects who are to obey, and no established imperative moral order.

That righteousness in John's conception, while not legalism, was yet on the other hand no mere emotional goodness, but charged with its full ethical and positive Biblical meaning, is indicated by the stress which is laid on repentance as requisite to membership in the kingdom: "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand". Repentance as he preached it was repentance of sin, and denoted not merely sin felt sorry for, but sin renounced, and renounced permanently, perpetually. This is clearly indicated in Matt. 3: 11, "I baptize you in water unto repentance". His baptism was intended to symbolize the final and absolute separation from the former sinful life of the person who received it; it was "unto", it had in view a perpetually realized repentance.

Thus John's gospel included the demand for an ethical revival. His teaching to his disciples was not only Messianic doctrine, but practical religion. Only the merest fragments of his ethical teaching remain, preserved for the most part in Luke. It is beyond the scope of the present paper to consider them in detail. We also learn incidentally from Luke that there was practical instruction on the subject of prayer.

If John the Baptist's gospel was one of practical righteousness and of obedience to law, is it not a gospel for us now and here—here in America, in church as well as in state? I know of no fact more ominous of evil than the effort making in so many quarters to throw overboard the idea of authority in Christian theology, and of obedience in the ethics of the Christian life. It is the testimony of many thoughtful and competent observers that the idea of obligatory law is becoming in a measure obsolete among us. What wonder, when a distinguished theologian tells us that "we must now replace the conception of a divine governor by that of the Heavenly Father, and the conception of a divine government by that of the divine family". Neither the prophets of the old nor the prophets of the new covenant came with such an exhortation, least of all did John the Baptist. Let us rather with him revive the idea of a divine government, and educate the modern conscience into an apprehension of its true import. Dr. R. W. Dale struck a true note in his volume of discourses, entitled, "The Laws of Christ for Common Life". A single quotation from that book may fitly close the present address, and add the weight of its eloquent appeal to the moral message of John the Baptist to our own time.

"The Jewish revival under Hezekiah was wrecked because it was not accompanied by a great reformation in morals. How is it with ourselves? Have the religious movements of late years produced any considerable ethical reforms? Has the ethical revival kept pace with the religious? Has our zeal for the building of churches, for the ingathering of members and for religious education been accompanied with any marked improvement in Christian character?

"We are entreating God to give greater energy and larger success to all the various forms of our Christian work. It is very necessary for us to remember that we have no right to expect that God will keep His promises



unless we keep His commandments. The words of the prophet, 'Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well', were addressed, not to the irreligious, but to those who were zealous in attending the services of the temple and in offering their sacrifices on the altar of God. And the words which follow, 'Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool', are not an assurance that God will forgive the sins of men who have lived an irreligious life if they become devout, but an assurance that He will forgive the sins of those who are earnest in religious services, if they set themselves honestly to the moral reformation of their own conduct. If they put away the evil of their doings, if they cease to do evil, learn to do well, God will have mercy upon them.

"No matter how noble may be the churches that we build, no matter how solemn may be the religious services which we celebrate, no matter how earnestly we may preach the Gospel, no matter with what fervor we may pray to God to grant us a great religious revival, we shall fail utterly if in our ordinary life we show no practical proof that in the kingdom of heaven to which we profess to belong there is a loftier type of character than in the world outside."

## “ THE CALL OF THE FIRST DISCIPLES.

( ST. JOHN 1 : 29-51.)

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We have in the first chapter of John's Gospel the method by which God calls His disciples and the purpose of the call. The method is four-fold and the purpose is five-fold.

### I. THE METHOD OF THE CALL.

1. *By public proclamation.* John stood in the open and said, “ Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world ”. If we would make the multitude hear the Gospel, we must, as John did, take the Gospel to them. If they have forsaken the church, the church must not forsake them. They can be found in the streets, and they will come to the theatre or secular hall more readily than to the church. Let no expense of strength, time or money be spared, that the crowds may be reached with the glad tidings of salvation.

But in John's preaching there was more than proclamation. There was testimony. Thirteen words are given to the proclamation, and one hundred and sixteen to the testimony. And though John was no egotist, he uses the personal pronouns “ I ” and “ me ” eleven times. He asserts the superiority of Christ to himself, and declares that his purpose in baptizing was to manifest Him to Israel. He tells what he knows about Christ, and closes with the superb confession : “ I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God ”. With every proclamation of Jesus there should go our testimony as to what He is to us, and the testimony should be as public as the proclamation. We preach to the multitude, and have our testimony meetings among ourselves. The man without a testimony has no place in the pulpit. He is to be a witness as well as a minister, and in the witness box there must be a personal knowledge.

2. *By more private proclamation.* “ Again the next day after John stood and two of his disciples, and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he saith, ‘ Behold the Lamb of God ’ ”. There was no need of his adding, “ which taketh away the sin of the world ”, for these well-instructed disciples of John knew what the mission of the Lamb of God was. They understood the symbolism of the paschal lamb, and were looking for Him to Whom it pointed.

These two disciples believed in John, and that made it easy for John to win them to Christ. “ The two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus ”. All of us have our little coteries of admirers and friends.

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\* Delivered at the First Conference, held at the First Baptist Church, October 21, 1903.

Have we, like John, won them to Christ? Have we so lived before them that when we speak to them of Jesus they immediately accept and follow Him? How about our children? Has their confidence in us made it easy for us to win them for Christ? Or have we exhibited to them such inconsistencies of life and have indulged with them in such doubtful amusements that they have reason to call in question our sincerity when we assure them that the Christian life is the noblest and happiest in the world? How about our Sunday School class? If we have won their respect and love, it will be easy for us to win them to Christ. A young lady in a Bible school requested the superintendent to give all her class except two to another teacher. He was surprised, and asked the reason. Her reply was that all her class except two had been converted, and she desired to retain them and seek a new class, that she might win them to Christ. Within a few months her heart's desire was gratified.

How about those with whom you work every day in the shop or store? If you are a consistent Christian, you have influence with them. Have you used that influence in winning them to Christ? Two young men at work in the same office had great respect for each other, and one of them was converted by means of a letter from a friend. Anxious to win his office friend to Christ, he one day expressed the wish that he were a Christian, when the friend had to confess with shame that he was a Christian, but such a negative one that the young man working at his side for a year or more did not find it out. The young man won by the letter was H. C. Trumbull, who became famous as a preacher, editor and author. The office-mate lost the opportunity of doing a great work for Christ and filling his life with the joy of feeling that he was a co-worker with God in the wide field of usefulness which Dr. Trumbull occupied.

How about the social circle in which you move? Have you won any of them to Christ, or have you so drifted into their worldly thoughts and ways that they find that they have won you and that you really have nothing better to offer them than they have to offer you?

A successful business man in New York went one evening with his wife to an evangelistic meeting; and as they were going home she ventured to say, "My dear, I was hoping that you would tonight manifest some interest in your spiritual welfare, for I wish you to know that I pray for you every day, and nothing could give me more pleasure than to have you become a Christian". He replied, "I am glad that you have mentioned the subject, and when we get home we will talk the matter over". After they had taken off their wraps and were comfortably seated in the parlor, he turned to her and said with gentle earnestness, "Now, my dear, you say you want me to become a Christian, and I promise that I will try to become one if you will show me in what respect you as a Christian differ from me who have made no profession of religion. You go to the theatre; so do I; and you seem to enjoy it as much as I do. I play cards, and you can beat me. I drink wine moderately, and so do you. I dance sometimes, and so do you. I do not lie nor steal nor kill nor commit adultery. Both positively and negatively we are alike so far as I can see. You say you

want me to be converted. Can you tell me from what or to what I am to be converted?" The wife was speechless, but that night, when face to face with God in prayer, she said something like this: "Lord, forgive me the great mistake I now see that I have made in dealing with my husband. Thou knowest that I have had the motive of seeking to win him to Thee and the church by going with him and doing as he does even when it was distasteful to me. And now I can see that, though he loves me, he has no confidence in my religion. Oh Lord, Thou knowest that I have in Thee and Thy work a joy which he has not, and I pray Thee to help me from this time to be so faithful to Thee and my deeper spiritual nature that he will be convinced that I have something better than he has".

If I were to mention the name of this man, some of you would recognize him as a man eminent in the world of business, and you would also recognize him as an eminent Christian worker, giving time and money for the advancement of the cause of Christ. And if you gain his confidence, he will tell you as he has told others that he was led to seek salvation when he noticed that the wife he loved above his life had an experience which separated her from the world and gave her a joy superior to the doubtful amusements, which even before his conversion, he believed were not in harmony with the pure spirit of Christianity. When our friends in the family or social circle see that we have yielded to their ways, they conclude, with good reason, that they have captured us, and, though they may esteem us for many excellent qualities, they regard our religious profession as a sort of fad or idiosyncrasy, if not a weakness, that they must tolerate. With such an abiding impression upon their minds any spasmodic efforts we may make for their conversion during a religious revival will not count for much. However convincing the argument that you have the right to assert your Christian privilege and indulge things that are not morally wrong, because you are not under the law but under grace, it remains true that the worldly people who enjoy these things with you are not attracted to the brand of religion which you exhibit; and if they join your church it is because they regard the church as a worldly institution and they are fit for membership because you are as worldly as they are. The men who really win others to Christ are the Pauls who assert the high Christian privilege of giving up their privileges, that they may not be stumbling-blocks in the way of others; who convince others that they have better meat to eat than that offered to idols, that it is no real sacrifice to give up the garlic and onions of Egypt for the manna from heaven. Such Christians are the insulated wires through which flows the current of divine power.

3. *By individual contact.* It is evident that Andrew and John started for their brothers just as soon as they were convinced that they had found the Messiah. John says that Andrew "first findeth his brother Simon", and the meaning is plain that Andrew found Simon before John found James. It was a sort of race between them as to which would be the first to find his brother and tell him the good news. Andrew was not a great preacher, so far as we know, but on the day of Pentecost, while Peter preached with a tongue of fire and three thousand were converted, he had



a right to feel that Peter's great sermon was the echo of the personal word which brought him to Jesus.

As soon as Jesus found Philip, he went to the home of his friend Nathanael, and said, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph". Nathanael was a learned Jew, while Philip was an unlettered peasant, and Archibald Brown may be right when he says that Philip misquoted his scripture, for neither Moses nor the prophets wrote of Jesus as the Son of Joseph, or as Jesus of Nazareth. Nathanael therefore quietly rebukes Philip for his blunder in misquoting scripture when he asks, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip acknowledges the mild impeachment as he says, "Come and see". As if to say, "Nathanael, I am not up in Scripture like you, but come and see Him for yourself. Though I may blunder in my Scripture quotation, I have not blundered in my estimate of Jesus". And thus a man with an experience is ready for soul-winning even though he may be ignorant of many things that it is important to know. If you have a vision of Christ as the Messiah and your Savior, tell someone else about Him. An illiterate cook in a country village won to Christ some of the best people in it, because she had a story of personal salvation to tell, and the people for whom she worked testified that her character confirmed the truth of her story. When Robert McCall began his work in Paris, he knew just two sentences in French,—“God loves you” and “I love you”. He spoke these short sentences to the people as he met them on the street, and began in this way his most successful life-work. We should be accurate in our Scripture quotations, but let not the fear of making mistakes prevent us from telling others of the Savior we trust and love.

4. *By the direct contact of Christ.* In the case of Philip there was no intermediate human agency. Jesus found him and said, "Follow Me". And shall we deny that Jesus at this day presents Himself directly to the minds and hearts of men and wins them to Himself? It is doubtless exceptional, but, in view of this case, I dare not say impossible. It implies previous knowledge, for Philip was evidently looking for the Messiah. He had read the Scriptures, even if his memory were faulty. And when there is a knowledge of the truth, God may move through it directly on the human soul. Every flower may suggest the lily of the valley, every stone the rock of ages, every star the star of Bethlehem, every breeze the work of the Spirit, every spring of water the fountain open for all uncleanness, every path the way of life, every flock of sheep the Good Shepherd, every sparrow the care of our Father, every sunrise the Sun of Righteousness, every meal the bread of life, and every garment the robe of His righteousness. Christ has given to almost everything in nature a tongue of suggestiveness with which it speaks in silent eloquence directly to the hearts of men. During a revival in a New England town, people were convicted and converted before they came to church. A wealthy gentleman told me that his ungodly coachman, who had shunned the meetings as he would small-pox, was seized with sudden conviction of sin while he was feeding his horses, and, kneeling in the hay of the stable loft, accepted Christ as his Savior and

Lord. The atmosphere of the town seemed to be charged with the power of God. Such is the case when the word has been faithfully preached and the people of God are in the spirit of intercessory prayer.

## II. THE PURPOSE OF THE CALL.

1. *To salvation.* John was no mere reformer. He did give advice to publicans and soldiers, but it was incidental. The purpose of his life-work is seen in the words, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world". The fact and problem of sin confronted him. He knew that men were guilty and lost. The first thing, therefore, which everyone needs is a Savior from sin. We are not ready to follow Him as Leader or walk with Him as Friend until sin has been dealt with and put away. John would have us begin our Christian life at the cross. To the vision of man's need the highest mountain in all the world is Calvary, the only mountain that rises above Sinai.

2. *To fellowship.* When Jesus asked the two disciples of John, "What seekest thou?" they replied, "Where dwellest thou?" He saith unto them, "Come and see". They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day. The first impulse of a regenerate soul is to be with Jesus. It loves the book, the church, the home, the company where Jesus is welcomed and honored. It shuns the place where Jesus would not be at home and happy in His surroundings. It yearns to be with Him all the time. And Jesus responds to this impulse of the renewed heart. He invites us to dwell with Him. What an evening of fellowship and instruction these two disciples must have had. What heart-burnings of love they must have felt; what raptures of joy; what inspirations of hope as He revealed to them His inner self and unfolded to them the far-reaching victories they were to gain through Him. Now, what they had for one day we may have every day, for He said, "Lo, I am with you all the days". He invites us to an intimate and perpetual fellowship. The condition is that we go with Him and not assert the self-life by asking Him to go with us. Enoch and Noah had a good time walking with God, and much of our unrest comes from the fact that we are trying to induce God to walk with us. He is always going in the right direction, and He always dwells in the right place. Let us seek His way and walk in it; the secret place where He dwells and abide there. Such constant fellowship is worth all the sacrifice it may cost.

3. *To service.* After the day with Jesus, Andrew and John are eager to tell others about Him. Such is always the effect of fellowship with Jesus. It gives courage and enthusiasm in soul-winning. It sends us to our friends with warm sympathetic hearts. It gives us vigorous faith. There is no tremor of doubt in the words of Andrew to Simon: "We have found the Messiah, which is being interpreted the Christ". "And he brought him to Jesus". Such direct personal testimony for Christ cannot fail to bring our friends to Jesus when, as in this case, it has in it the fresh glow of a present experience. If Andrew had gone to Simon and told him an experience ten years old, it would have had little effect. I can imagine that Andrew had in his face a glow of hope, love and joy like the shining face of

Moses when he came down from a face-to-face talk with God on the mount. When people take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, they are ready to hear our message concerning Him. Secret fellowship is the source of power in service.

4. *To transformation.* "When Jesus beheld him, He said, 'Thou art Simon the son of Jonah; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation a stone'". As soon as the unstable and impulsive Simon is brought to Jesus, our Lord begins the work of transforming his character. The son of Jonah has the nature of the dove, easily frightened, but before Jesus gets through with him he shall be Cephas, with a character of granitic stuff, resisting evil and strong enough to be a pillar in the temple of God. There seems to have been a bit of the dove still left in him when at the trial of Jesus he took fright and denied his Lord, but it was evidently in its dying flutter, for on the Day of Pentecost we find him as bold as a lion and as unyielding as the stones of Gibraltar. His first view of Christ begins in him this transformation. Simon was usually talkative, but here for once he has nothing to say. There was something in the presence of Jesus which awed him into silence. The narrative gives us words from John, Andrew, Philip and Nathanael, but not a word from Simon. He is too full of thought and emotion to speak. He simply listens to the sweetest of voices and looks lovingly into the most majestic of faces. The "altogether lovely" One has thrown a charm of fascination over the rough fisherman. There is a spiritual mesmerism to which Simon yields without an effort at resistance. He has found not only the Messiah of Israel but the Master of men. Now that the sun is in the heavens, all the stars, however brilliant, are forgotten.

There has begun in him the process by which heavenly character is made. John says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is". God does not arbitrarily bestow perfect character in heaven; it is made by the process of seeing Jesus as He is. This process is clearly given in 2 Cor. 3:18: "We all with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of God". Beholding Jesus as the Lamb of God gives us sight with which we may ever afterward see Him in all the perfection of His character, and "seeing Him as He is" is the means by which the Holy Spirit transforms us into His likeness. The process with Peter was slow, because, like the rest of us, he was often more inclined to look at himself and others than at Jesus, and the transformation was thus hindered. But Jesus is patient, and, having begun the good work, He will continue it until He shall see in us His own image and be satisfied.

When Andrew brought his rough swearing brother to Jesus, he was doing good ethical work. A lecture on profanity would have done little good. Doubtless that had been tried more than once. What Simon needed was the Lamb of God, who could settle the problem of sin for him by making it possible for him to get rid of its guilt and pollution and give him an ideal that would inspire him to nobler living. In Jesus he found both. If we would reform our friends, whose bad habits are a grief to us, let us bring



them to Jesus. He will begin with them at once, as He did with Peter, the process of transformation, and will sooner or later make them not only negatively good, enabling them to give up bad habits, but positively good in the possession of Christian graces. The merely ethical method may cast out evil spirits and leave the house "empty, swept and garnished", ready for "seven other spirits more wicked than himself", so that the last state is worse than the first. But this Christian process casts out the evil spirit and fills the house with angels of light, more powerful than all the demons of darkness that prowl around, seeking entrance.

5. *To vision.* "Jesus saw Nathanael coming unto Him, and saith of him, behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile". Our Lord said these words of Nathanael in such a way that Nathanael heard them. If we have anything good to say of young converts, it will not hurt them to hear it. And if you have anything bad to say, it ought to be said before them and not behind their backs. For this reason I do not send applicants for baptism from the room after they have related their experience in order that all may be free to discuss their cases. Let them remain and hear what is said about them. If it is good, they will be encouraged, and if it is bad they ought to hear it before it comes to them second-hand and exaggerated, as is almost certain to be the case. Nothing ought to be said about anybody that we are not willing for them to hear. Truly happy is the young convert who, like Nathanael, hears words of commendation from the lips of Jesus. He has a foretaste of the joy with which he will hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant".

The answer of Nathanael shows that Jesus had won not only his respect, but his love and loyalty: "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel". As if to say, "Lord, if I am an Israelite, Thou art my King. Here is the scepter and crown. Sit on the throne of my being and reign supreme". The reference to Israel suggests Jacob and his ladder, and our Lord uses the vision of Jacob as an illustration by which He gives to Nathanael a new vision of Himself as "Son of God" and "Son of man". "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man". In other words, "Nathanael, in calling Me Son of God you have given the top of Jacob's ladder, which reached to the skies; let me give you the bottom of the ladder, which rests upon earth—Son of man. I am both human and divine. In My deity God is made accessible to you, and in My humanity you are accessible to God. As God-man I am the medium of communication between heaven and earth—the Word made flesh. Through Me, as Son of God and Son of man, the messengers of your need, your praises and your prayers ascend to God, and through Me, as Son of man and Son of God, the messengers of God's love and mercy descend upon you. I am the real Jacob's ladder, which makes not an occasional but a constant vision of the open heaven and an unbroken communication between God and man".

Such a vision is the privilege of every Christian, and the secret of perpetual joy and victory is in translating the vision into daily experience. God is accessible to us at all times. He hears our praises and answers our



prayers. He delights to give us of "His fullness and grace for grace." Through Jesus Christ heaven opens toward us for giving and receiving. God offers to us His best, and it is fitting that we should give to Him our best.

While Queen Victoria was on her bed of sickness, she said to the chaplain at her side, "I wish that the Lord Jesus Christ would come in glory before I die". He replied, "Why, Your Majesty, do you wish that Christ would come before you die?" "Because", she answered, "I can think of nothing that would give me more pleasure than the privilege of giving to Him with my own hand the crown of Great Britain and India". The spirit of Nathanael and of Victoria that would crown Jesus King in every realm of our being is the spirit of every loyal son of God, and Jesus is worthy that every day should be a coronation day.

\* "SONS OF GOD".

(ST. JOHN 1:9.)

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I wish to congratulate you, dear friends, upon these conferences and upon selecting for your study the Gospel of St. John, for St. John's Gospel has been attacked more than any other of the Four Gospels, and I suppose it has been attacked because it is preeminently the Gospel of believers. I think the older we grow the more we occasionally, almost insistently, go to it for devotional reading. It is the Gospel which, under God's guidance, was written for the church—for the members of the church. It is most theological in some aspects of it, but it certainly bears very especially and clearly upon the believer's relationship to Jesus Christ. It is in St. John's Gospel that you have the verse which is *the* verse of the whole Gospel—John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life". It is in St. John's Gospel that you have that marvelous chapter, the fifteenth, declaring our relationship to Jesus Christ, our union with Him, and that we have that wonderful prayer of our Lord, sometimes called the sacramental prayer, in which He prays that there may exist between Himself and His disciples the same relationship that exists between God and Himself.

In fact, there are passages which make us almost hold our breath in reverence, and I think that is particularly true in connection with the subject about which I am to speak to you.

"To them gave He power to become the sons of God".

When we remember that in this very Gospel (as Dr. White has shown), Jesus Himself was called by Nathanael the Son of God, and when we remember how St. John, in his epistles, so wonderfully refers to that fact when he says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is", then we realize the greatness of the message.

"That we should be called the sons of God". It makes us fairly tremble and hesitate to think any such honor and glory should be given to us. Yet, as we read the first twelve verses of chapter one, it seems to follow so naturally as the result of God's coming into this world that it is almost logical. Do you remember how it reads? "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

"The same was in the beginning with God.

"All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.

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\* Delivered at the First Conference, held at the First Baptist Church, October 21, 1903.

"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

"The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe.

"*That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not".

Saddest verses in the Bible.

"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name:

"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God".

You see at once how the very purpose of Christ's coming into this world was that we might be the sons of God. St. John shows in the verses I have just quoted that the love of God was so great that He made it possible for us to become His sons. There is something to say about this sonship. We are all of us children of God by creation, and as God's sons by creation we can claim something from Him. We may reverently say that we can claim from God a way of redemption, because of His creation alone. Notwithstanding the fact that we have willingly fallen away from Him, since we are His sons by creation we may become His sons by adoption—by re-creation.

Hence you see what a growth there is in our relationship to God. I am God's child because He has made me. I am God's child because He has remade me, through Jesus Christ. And yet, you notice how the truth enters—we are all God's children by creation, but only those who believe in Him have received the power to become His sons by re-creation. Dwell a little longer upon that word—son. Just think what it means; the Son of God! It means a great deal when we use it—as it is not used here in St. John's Gospel—simply as referring to our creation. That God made me, gives me, or ought to give me, self respect; that God made me, gives me, or ought to give me, the desire to struggle against all that is evil; gives me, or ought to give me, a vision of all that may be mine; gives me, or ought to give me, a sense of responsibility concerning my fellow men, concerning the world itself, which is God's world, and which, because it has fallen from Him, I, His son by creation, am bound to do all I can to bring back to Him. If you can get no further than this, that you are His son by creation, you have gotten a great distance. And I sometimes think we may make a mistake in taking men on too rapidly. A great many, because they have not been sufficiently or properly instructed, think that because God has made them, and because they are His sons by creation, all of these rich results necessarily follow. When you turn to the "sons of God" interpreted by "re-creation", how much more wonderful it is to be God's son;



to be admitted to His fellowship because I trust Him and love Him; and being His beloved son, to be admitted more and more, as I am able to bear it, into the mysteries of His truth; to be made more and more the object of His confidence; to be made more and more acquainted with the powerful purposes through which He works; to be made more and more in my own being after His image—converted into His likeness—and, at last, to be permitted to enter into His presence, where *shall* be revealed the very acme of glory.

Remember that wonderful verse in St. John's epistle.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is".

If any man had written these words without inspiration it would be blasphemy to speak them; and, as it is, we tremble and cover our faces, and yet that is what being sons of God must mean.

Now, I want you to think of the way in which this sonship of God by re-creation is granted us. I shall speak of the power afterwards. I wish to speak of the sonship first.

We are the sons, or we have the power to become the sons, of God. Evidently, this must be something which comes not in a moment but gradually. We are made the sons of God by creation in a moment, as it were, when we are born; by the very fact of our existence we are God's children. We are made the sons of God by re-creation by a precise power to become such—not accidentally. St. John afterwards wrote to the Christians—for I think we may take it that his epistles were addressed to the Christians—"beloved, now are we the sons of God", because we have entered into the fullness of the Christian life. It is only after years of experience and education that we enter into it. St. John was an old man, and he felt as though those to whom he wrote had an experience like his own. So that to become sons of God, we are not suddenly changed either physically or morally, but we enter into a new condition. I think that sometimes those who hold to the Anglican catechism forget the true meaning of its words. It says that we are made members of Christ, children and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. The prayer-book undoubtedly means here—for we are told that it teaches nothing that cannot be proved by Holy Scripture—that when the individual is brought to the blessed gift spoken of by Christ to Nicodemus, he begins to grow, he begins to become the son of God by adoption and re-creation. I think it is very necessary to remember that, for two or three reasons. In the first place, we feel ourselves utterly unworthy in our unregenerated state to assume such a title as sons of God. Secondly, we must recognize that the grace of God in the individual heart is just like His power which worketh in the world: it works gradually. There is at least that much truth in evolution: the power of God works gradually. Certain persons, we are told in the book of Acts, were in the process of being saved. So it is with the man who enters into this state whereby he may become the son of God: gradually going on in that state he reaches higher perfection. There is something very beautiful to me in this revelation of God in connection with

our growth. I go on more and more clinging to Him, trying to serve Him and becoming more and more His son. And it is more and more a conscious relationship. It is not a state merely. It certainly is not only a condition, but it is a relationship; the very word itself implies that.

Take the illustration of my boy. My boy is my son by birth. I stand by his cradle and look at him with loving eyes, and I say, "My boy, my boy". By-and-by that boy grows up, and he begins to come to me to learn he gains confidence in me, and he says, "Papa, I love you"; he comes to me with his sins and says, "I am sorry I did wrong"; he comes to have a trust in me, and my heart goes out with a deeper and ever deeper flow of love for him, and what is the result? By-and-by, when that boy has grown up to wisdom, and the strength of intelligence is reached—when that boy has grown to a position where he can enter into my plans, can see the plan of my life and my plans for his life—then I hold his hand and look into his face and say, "My boy, my son". Can't you see the difference in that expression from the day when I stood by his cradle of possibilities—not yet realized—and the day when I stood by him in his youth and recognized the growing strength and felt those bonds which through the years had bound us closer and closer? It is the same in our connection with God in sonship. He puts forth the decree that I shall enter into relationship with Him, and He gives me the means whereby that relationship may be made ever stronger and richer and purer, so that I may become more and more conscious of the possibilities of that relationship. He opens the flood-gates of His divine love and care for and interest in me, as I am able to receive it. And by-and-by the time will come when I shall be like Him. That is, when I shall have proved, through my loyalty, through my love, but, above all else, through the power of Jesus Christ, my willingness to give all that I have and all that I am to Him, and shall have reached that state of consciousness when I realize that it is not I, "but Christ in me". Then I shall be, as the Lord prays in the seventeenth chapter of St. John—I shall be one with Christ even as Christ is one with God.

Then, again, I want you to understand that this sonship is a relationship in which we become more and more intimate with God. The old idea was that you could not know God. The old idea was that no man could see God. Indeed, we have it in the Gospels, "No man hath seen God at any time". Yet we have it in the beatitudes, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God", and I think this beatitude refers to this life, not some future life. I have it in my consciousness that I have been re-created by Jesus Christ; I have it in my consciousness that He is pouring more and more of His grace into me, because I am willing and ready that He should, and so I enter more and more into a knowledge of God.

And there we come to what is sometimes called Christian experience, which is a very important thing, and which sometimes, oftentimes, we confuse, with other things because of its frequent use. By-and-by the Christian comes to a position where he can say "I know", as St. Paul said; where he knows that God is his father; where he knows that, notwithstanding the contradictions of life, God is working out a glorious ending.

By-and-by he becomes so intimate with God that even though he cannot understand God's working, because God is infinite and he is finite, nevertheless he is conscious of God's truthfulness, and he works in connection with it. I go on my work tomorrow. I know not what God has for me, but I love Him so, I trust Him so fully and I know so well how He loves me and cares for me, that I know whatever comes will be right: I know that nothing can happen because God is ordering all things for my best good, and consequently for His great and eternal glory. So He comes into a practical relationship with life. You cannot live a great life as you ought to live it unless you are His. In your life tomorrow—I care not what your struggles may be or what your occupation may be—you cannot meet the experiences of life, you cannot meet the trials of life, any more than you can intelligently study the Word of God unless you are conscious of this sonship. Why? Because it is only to the son that God can reveal Himself. It is only to the man who has willingly entered into the state in which God reveals Himself to him, and in which he grows more and more into the nature of God, that there can come an understanding of how God works, so that he can trust himself entirely to God, and do everything that he does in God's name. That is what the apostle undoubtedly meant when he said, "Do all things to the glory of God". He mentions the small details of life which, in the early days, were counted evil in themselves. He says, "Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God". That is the beauty of the Gospel, that it leads us not only up to the infinite mind of God, but into the kingdom of God in its glory and beauty.

He not only gives me that glorious vision, but He sends me out into the struggle of the world, with all its agonies, with all of its friendships, with all of its losses, and makes me live the life of a son of God; makes me live as one who knows that God is working with him; makes me live as one who is conscious of a great divine power working behind him. It is not a theological declaration. No truth is true until it is applied, and no truth of God can stand as a creed until it has entered into the heart of the individual who repeats the creed. So you cannot know what the sonship of God is until you have entered into this power in your own lives.

And there is just one more thought I want to bring out in regard to this sonship. It is the way in which, more and more, the man gains power himself because he is God's son. My father, let us suppose, owns some land. He is away. I am his son. Someone comes and begins to trespass upon that land. I go to him and say, "You cannot do that, sir". "Why not?" he cries out, "Who are you?" "I am the son of the man who owns this land". And he at once recognizes my authority; he knows that I, being the son of my father, have a right to claim that he shall not injure that which belongs to my father, a right to protect that which is my father's, because my father and I, supposedly, are wholly in sympathy and our rights are common. Now, there you have the secret of human power. There you have the difference between the effort of a man to be good in himself, without any thought of God, and the effort of a man to be good because he



knows he is God's son. What a difference there is. I start out tomorrow, and I try to be a moral man; I try to make the world better, and I go on in my own strength and—fail absolutely. I go out tomorrow, having first knelt down and acknowledged my sonship and asked my Father to give me grace, and when the troubles come, when I desire to help this one or defend that one, when I stand up for the truth or speak against evil, then I am conscious that it is not I alone but God and I. I have the right to speak, the right to do, because I am God's son. There cannot be any failure in such a case. Why? Because God is back of the man, because God is in the man. He may be working, probably is working, after a diviner plan than the man can comprehend; He probably is working after a very much more mysterious plan than the man could understand if God tried to reveal it to him. But God and he are working together.

Now, turn from that to the first part of our verse. "*Power to become sons of God*". Oh, never forget that. You cannot rate it too highly. It makes the difference between a human and a divine being. It makes the difference between a regenerated and unregenerated being. It makes the difference between one who looks up into God's face, conscious of his own unworthiness, but who says, "My Father", and a man who goes around and believes in God just as the devil believes in Him and trembles.

Power. "To them gave He power", and that implies, incidentally, does it not, that the human will comes in, and that is where we have often-times made a great mistake in connection with both our efforts for and our preaching of Christianity. We have not thought enough of the will which God has given us. I like, I confess, that grand old controversy which used to be very rabid sometimes, which is almost forgotten in these days: the controversy about a man's free will and God's predetermination. I like it, not because we can ever solve the problem therein suggested, but because it brings out the fact that God, in making man, made man responsible; I will not say God cannot, because I will not say that God cannot do anything, but He *will* not say to man who will not love Him, "You shall love Me". Why? Because He respects the individual. God wants a voluntary love. I don't want my boy to love me because he is afraid not to love me, nor because I am his father. I don't want him to obey me because he is afraid of the results if he does not obey me. I want him to love me because he can't help it. I want him to do what I ask him to do because he wants to, because he loves to please me. God has made us free agents in that. He gave them "power to become".

Ah, my dear friends, it is easy enough to stand before obstacles; it is easy enough to stand, as the children of Israel did long ago on the shore, and cry out. The question is whether you have any will in yourself to be better and to do better, to overcome. The question is whether your will is turned for or against righteousness, whether your will is turned towards or away from God. That solves the very primal condition of the religious nature. Look into your heart tonight, Christian though you may be, and test the growth of your sonship. Do, you will to will those things which God wills? Or, are you absolutely indifferent, with no idea that you have



anything to do about it, saying, "God does everything"? I like the passage in the parable of the prodigal son, in St. Luke's Gospel, where the prodigal says, "I *will* arise". There was his personal determination. The father standing there could not save him unless he was willing to come back; but as soon as he was willing to come, then the father went out to save him and to redeem him. And I thank God for this very declaration in the words which He has spoken through John, because it respects my individuality; because it makes me feel that anything I do, I do of my free will. How was it with the poor woman who touched Christ's garment? She had to do something. She said, "I will touch the hem of His garment", and she did and was healed. And so in all the great history of the dealings of our Lord with men. So with you and me today. There is a great mistake made, I think, in regard to the relationship of the human will to God's will. I have heard ministers say they are two different things and they come into opposition, and there is the cross. I don't think anything of the kind. My will is simply to get into parallelism with God's will. "Grant that I may will, but will nothing but what Thou wilt". That is a voluntary prayer. And then He gives "power to become". Now, doubtless it makes some of you a little startled because I say this. Centered first of all in the individual. Here is the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ. The minister stands in the pulpit and proclaims it with all his power, that God is willing to give: but the declaration cannot do anything alone. It is only as the individual comes forth and says, "I will" that there follows a result. You must place yourself in the right condition if you wish to become the sons of God. You can't do anything for yourself; you can't manufacture yourself, or remake yourself, but you can put yourself where God can remake you. Oh, these human wills. God doesn't break them. He didn't crush Peter's will. He didn't make him a different man from what he was, but He put a new power into him. He wants you to make your will His.

Secondly, this power implies, evidently, the work of Jesus Christ. You can't become God's sons save through Jesus Christ. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life". Then, again, that glorious verse quoted before, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God". Now I am not going into any long theological declaration, although I think it would be intensely interesting, of the way in which, through Jesus Christ, we are reconciled to God; but I think we may not recognize this, that when I have gone wrong and am miserable and wretched, even though I may will God's power to help me, I need some manifestation of that power to lift me up. Some have said: "You don't have any recognition of that in the parable of the prodigal son, do you?" I answer that we must not make all of God's parables teach everything of God's truth, because they are put forward, most of them, to declare some portion of the truth. But I do say, that even in that parable, although the father ran out and welcomed him and said: "Thou art my son", yet the son had to be cleansed and clothed, and shoes put upon his feet before he was taken into the house. I may will to be God's son, but my will

is nothing without Christ, Who makes it all possible, Who takes away the error which covers me, Who opens up the road by which I must go, Who places over me the robe of His divine righteousness, Who presents me to God as His child. There can be no sonship without Jesus Christ. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". "To them gave He power to become the Sons of God". Oh, that glorious power of Christ! Do you wonder that the religion which expresses this truth has been called Christianity? Do you wonder that it is in that Name that every knee shall bow, while every tongue confesses that Jesus is God? Do you wonder that the little child kneeling at his mother's knee, and the man in the depths of the struggle of life, and the aged just about to cross the river of death cry alike, "Jesus, lover of my soul"? Do you know that He makes you a son of God just as soon as you are willing to let Him? Do you know that He gives you the power by which and through which you grow day by day, having entered into this new relationship? Do you know that He gives you the power by which you begin to understand God more and more, and to enter into the mysteries of His truth and of His service? Do you know that He gives you the power whereby, conscious of the right of the Eternal behind you, you go further and further, from victory to victory? Jesus, the Word made flesh! Jesus upon the cross! Jesus exalted at the right hand of God!

Again I want you to notice in the preceding verse and in the first part of this verse, the words "that was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own", that is, His own people and His own nation, "and His own received Him not. *But as many as received Him*, to them gave He power". *Received!* Sometimes people read that "believed". Belief is a glorious thing. As Dr. White so helpfully said tonight, it is the trusting of yourself to God. But that receiving, it seems to me, is something which precedes the believing. I love that old prayer: "Take my heart, oh Jesus, for I cannot give it to Thee, and when Thou hast it, keep it, for I cannot keep it for Thee". "As many as received Him"! How beautiful! He went to certain villages; they received Him, and He there could work miracles. He went to other villages; they there received Him not, and He could there do no mighty work. I receive Him first, as the historic personage, the Being Who once lived at such a time and whose truth has conquered the world. I receive Him as a divine Being, as Canon Row says: The Man Who never sinned, thereby proving His divine origin, because never but once and only once has a sinless man lived. I receive Him as One who has blessed men so that they could die without fearing. I receive Him as the One who comes into my own life and becomes my Christ, my Savior. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power". First you will; then the power of Christ resulting from your will; and then your receiving that Christ, in order that He may give that which you are willing to let Him give. Isn't it a wonderful truth? You see how this growth of which I spoke goes on. I cry, "I am nothing of myself, but I do hunger for Thee; I do more and more thirst for

Thee!" There is my will. Then God responds to that will. He says: "Behold, I am here, my child". He stands there and knocks, and when I open the door and say, "Come in", He enters. That goes on all through life. We are so imperfect that we have to renew, as it were, this association; not renew the state, but keep on renewing the conditions. I love that passage in St. John where, in speaking to Peter, Christ says: "He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet". The conditions have to be again and again renewed, just as I wash my hands again and again all through the day, but the one fact remains, being done once for all. We have to cry out, "O God, I need Thee", a thousand times a day. And God says: "I am here, my child". And I cry out, "Enter in, O Lord, enter into my speech, enter into my service; what I do is nothing without Thee". But His gift to me never has to be renewed.

Again; God works through means. I am His child by creation, and it has pleased Him that my body and my mind should grow by the use of those things which He has prepared. I eat, I sleep, I take exercise, I go in and out amongst men, and thereby my physical being grows. And God has ordained exactly the same method whereby my spiritual being may grow; and without the use of these means, my dear friends, I cannot grow. There you have the practical Christian life going on day after day. I must pray. I must live in constant companionship with God. I must read His Book; it is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. I must go to my church and worship, for He has promised a blessing where two or three are gathered together. I must use what are ordinarily called "the means of grace". John brings out again and again those ordinances of grace. He speaks of baptism. He speaks of the Holy Communion: "Do this in remembrance of Me". And as we go on using these means, we find that the sonship becomes richer and fuller, and God becomes more willing and able to pour more and more of His divine power into us.

I want you to realize, my friends, that this power to become the sons of God is something which is of us, in us, and through us by the influence of God's Holy Spirit. There we have the Three Persons in the Godhead working together. "God so loved"; Christ coming that we might be saved; and the Holy Spirit entering in that the growth may progress. May God grant us grace to realize more and more fully in our lives the magnificent glory that is ours! And God grant us grace at the same time humbly, lovingly to recognize that this is not a birth which comes after any human fashion, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, *but of God*".



\* "FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH".

(ST. JOHN 1 : 14.)

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The text I am to study is a single verse. But at the risk of repeating what may have been already said, I must sum up the thought of the verses that precede it. The Prologue of the Gospel, the first eighteen verses, is so compact, so solidly thought together that an ox team could not draw a sentence from its place. So the context is vital to the text.

The Prologue, at this point, illustrates the working of the author's mind at large. He has been accused of mental monotony. And there is a certain justification for the charge. To a singular degree he is one-thoughted. His system is all center. He is like the man in our Lord's parable, who, finding the pearl of great price, sold all that he had and bought it. So, both by reason of the wider context as well as by reason of the nearer context we must gather up the thought of the Prologue in order to enter this verse along the line of the author's own mental motion.

The theme is the divine tragedy. The reality of God has entered history and men lack perception of it. The full light of God's mind and plan of redemption has shone forth, and 'tis as if the sun had risen in all its beauty to beat vainly against the obtuseness of men born blind. The life of the Son of God has been lived out in the midst of the chosen people; and His life is as a landscape to a blind man's eye.

The Gospel has two sides. Under one aspect, it is a study in the life of Christ. Under the other aspect, it is the autobiography of apostolic faith. The author is writing a great tragedy, the story of Israel's unbelief. At the same time he tells us how a few were led into belief, how the Christ educated a little body of disciples and friends, leavening them with His life, infusing into them His mind, till at last, the eyes of the heart being opened, they came to know their Master, in some measure, as He knew Himself, and to think after Him His thoughts about God and man.

Verse 5. "The light shineth in the darkness and the darkness did not perceive and apprehend it". Had John known Plato's illustration of the men who lived in a cave and saw the light only as it filtered down through their obstinate pride and tenacious prejudices, he might well have used it here.

Verse 11. "He came to His own estate" in history, to the land which God had chosen for the stage of the redemptive life. "And His own people", His kith and kin, His countrymen, the stewards of His estate, "gave Him no welcome".

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\* Delivered at the First Conference, held at the First Baptist Church, October 21, 1903.

Verses 12 and 13. "But to all those who gave Him welcome" who surrendered their prejudices into His keeping, who put their views of God and man into His hands, "He gave the right and the power to become the children of God". I mean says John, "Those who believed in His name", that is, those who accepted His view of life, His understanding of the national hope of Israel, His revelation of God, as the ultimate truth about God and man. We have here a very simple and intelligible description of the mystery of the New Birth. To John it meant admission into the intimacy of the Saviour. Friends live in one another's life and mind. The new born man takes Christ's point of view for his very own, and so enters into His purpose and His power.

Verse 14. "The Word became flesh". The term *Logos*, translated "Word", as John uses it, has two strains in its pedigree,—the Greek and the Hebrew. To the Greek the *Logos* is the outgoing Reason of God. To the Hebrew it is the will and plan of God, entering history to guide and shape and control it. Both elements are in the Johannic term. But the Hebraic element is the controlling one. The *Logos* is the full expression of God's mind and heart and purpose touching man's redemption.

"The Word became flesh". Our word "flesh" cannot translate John's word. No one can study the Bible long and earnestly without being forced to the conclusion that the literal translation is sometimes the worst possible translation. In a good translation we must convey not only the logic of the original, but its emotion and colour. Now our word "flesh" is too crassly physical to convey the feeling of the original. Let us then make use of paraphrase and say "God's Word, His Self-expression, took unto itself a perfect and real humanity".

Thus and thus alone could God's thought about men come within reach of the everyday man. The Incarnation, to us who deeply and devoutly believe in it, is the only possible method whereby God's whole mind can be made intelligible to the commonest man. And we think that the alternative is a speculative mysticism, by means of which the man highly favoured by talents and leisure may reason and train himself into intimacy with God's innermost thought. But we Christians will have nothing to do with a revelation of God that belongs to the scholar and the speculator. We are common folk ourselves. We have cast in our lot with the common folk. And to us the Incarnation is the necessary means and method whereby God puts His secrets within the reach of the man in the field and the man on the street.

"And dwelt amongst us"? that is, in the midst of the chosen witnesses, the men who through intimacy with Jesus had their eyes opened to the meanings of His being and work. It was through their faith in Him, their spiritual perception of His nature and His mind that the Son of God effected a lodgment in human consciousness for His revelation of the Father.

"And we gazed upon His glory". It is the eager and attentive look of faith that John has in mind. Not the casual look of the passer-by, or the indolent glance of the idly curious, but the penetrating look of a man whose mind is bound to a supreme object. The man in the street looks at the

starry heavens. The astronomer gazing at them, puts his soul into his look. So the chosen men, drawn by the Christ, put heart and soul into their study of Him. For this is the deeper meaning of faith; it is the steady attention of man to the supreme object of spiritual interest, an eager and tireless and piercing perception which will not rest until it has gone to the heart of its subject.

"His glory". Our word "glory" does not fully or happily translate the Greek. The original involves the thought of power and majesty. Read the Second Isaiah. He throws a clear light on the larger meaning of the word. God's glory is His mastery over history, manifested through the crisis of Israel's experience, the clear outshining of His will and purpose asserting complete control over the nations. So, the glory of the Christ is His masterfulness. To the unbeliever He was a bankrupt Galilean. To the believer He was the embodied might of God.

Again the original contains something of the meaning of our word beauty. Plato described beauty as the visibleness of truth. John describes the Christ as the visibleness of the mind and heart of God. Christ is the synonym of God in terms of human experience. He is the beauty of God. Through the Incarnation the being of God penetrates history, embodying itself in humanity. Thus it becomes compelling, irresistible, even as noble beauty is irresistible. So, to the eye of faith, of spiritual perception, the Christ is the embodiment of the mastery and beauty of God.

"The mastery and beauty as of an only-begotten Son". In the Christ God speaks His deep and clear and final word regarding the mystery of our life and His life. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father". God's Son fully represents God to our heart and conscience. Touching Him we touch the ultimate moral and spiritual meaning of things.

"Full of Grace". Great words, incessantly used, grow stale. They are no longer instinct with expression. And it is a waste of energy on our part to refuse to recognize this law regarding words. So we would better disuse the word "grace" for a time and substitute a word or phrase which shall convey the thrill of the original. Both Paul and John meant by grace the inseting energy and love of God. Human consciousness, standing before its tasks, is empty of power to meet them, unless God comes to our aid. Life, beset by problems it cannot solve and debts it cannot pay, is like a cove which the tide has long forsaken. The mud flats lie bare. The rock-weed turns brown. But the tide returns. The cove learns afresh the great lesson that the universe cares for it. Irresistible cosmic forces lift the sea and drive its waters, in all their strength and recreating power, into the forsaken cove. And now all is changed. The cove tingles and glows with the sense of its kinship to the universe and the confident consciousness of its dignity. So with the heart seeking salvation. If it relies upon itself, the tide goes out. The flats lie bare. Human helplessness is clearly revealed. But the Christ presents Himself to our attention. Through faith we enter into His mind and nature and meaning. And lo! a flood of divine energy sets into the soul. Life is filled, bankfull, with the consciousness of power and peace.



“Full of grace and truth”. Once more we must depart from the established translation if we would catch the full force of the original. Our word truth, noble as it is, leans too much to the subjective side of experience. We have another word, reality, inseparable from truth, that may serve us better. John found in Jesus of Nazareth the reality of all the promises that God had given to Israel. And thus was he saved from sin and doubt and despair. Only reality can save us. The reality of human goodness saves us from despair about humanity. We touch the goodness of the saints and our confidence in our race is restored. Even so we touch the Christ and, in touching Him, touch the very mind and being of God. He is the divine reality, the pledge and assurance of God’s power to keep all the promises which He hath given us.

Finally, would we enter deep into this great text, we must think together two things which we have been in the habit of holding more or less apart. The men of the Bible, both of the Old and the New Testaments, instinctively connected the thought of individual salvation with the thought of the Kingdom of God. The prophet never spoke about his perfection without speaking at the same time about the consummation of history. The apostles never preached or wrote about their own immortality without at the same time publishing the news of the returning Christ.

Therefore, to enter fully into the text before us, let us imagine that we have bent our whole strength to founding the Kingdom of God amongst men, and that the terribleness of the task has robbed us of our confidence and courage. It cannot be done, we begin to say. As individuals we may be saved. God’s mercy will take us through death into eternal life. But that God’s power and mercy can lift our race and nation to the level of His mind and plan, this is too hard to be believed.

Yet this, nothing less, is the faith that the Saviour imparts to us. He brings God’s being and mind close to our consciousness and conscience. His revelation of God is not made to the mystic, the scholar and the monk. On the contrary, it is made in the very midst of us. The Word of God takes upon itself our humanity and dwells among us. Through the incarnate Word the divine being and purpose come upon us with irresistible force to save from disheartenment and despair. The beauty of Christ is as compelling, as little to be escaped from or disbelieved in, as the beauty of the dawn of a day in early June. The eye makes a love-match with the sun, and lo! the wonder and splendor of the visible world. So the eye of the heart, through our discovery of the Christ, makes a love-match with the being and beauty of God. One cannot doubt. One cannot falter. He joyously surrenders himself to an unconquerable faith in humanity. “The Word took upon Himself our humanity and dwelt in the midst of us. And we gazed upon His beauty and splendor, the splendor as of one who is the only Son of His Father, full of saving power and convincing reality”.

## \* THE MIRACLE AT CANA

With an attempt at a Philosophy of Miracles.

ST. JOHN 2:1-11.)

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This Fourth Gospel was written long after Matthew, Mark and Luke. It was intended as a supplement to them. The Synoptics give us the main facts of Jesus' life and teaching, his works, his death, his resurrection. This Gospel gives us the explanation of the facts, in the eternity, the personality, the deity of Christ himself. It presupposes the previous Gospels and builds upon them, yet it adds but few facts to those which they relate. The miracle of Cana is the first miracle that Jesus wrought, and it gives the rule and type of all his miracles. The purpose of it is intimated when the evangelist tells us that "this beginning of his signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory".

That word "glory" takes us back to the first chapter of the Gospel, and we shall better understand the miracle if we consider the place which it occupies in the Gospel as a whole. True to his purpose of explanation, John begins with a thesis or proposition which he proceeds to demonstrate. He solves all the problems of the Synoptics by boldly asserting at the very start that the eternal Word of God has been manifested in Jesus of Nazareth. It is an argument from the divine to the human, as John's first Epistle is an argument from the human to the divine. The argument, however, is deductive rather than inductive. It propounds a principle and then proceeds to point out the operation of it. It declares Christ to be nothing less than Deity revealed, and then shows that this necessarily makes him not only the Christ for whom the Old Testament had prepared the way, but also the Son of God who has wider relations as Lord of the Universe and Savior of mankind.

The Synoptics had been content to trace Jesus' origin back to Abraham and to Adam. The Fourth Gospel asserts that before Abraham was born, Christ already was; nay, it maintains that Christ was the Creator not only of Abraham but of all humanity. It goes even further and holds that Christ is God's only medium of communication and activity; he is the preserver as well as the creator of all, and whatever has come into being is life only in him. Since he is the life of the universe, he can be its light, and all knowledge of God and of truth proceeds from him. Christ is the only Revealer of God. He has been revealing God throughout all human history. The darkness of sin has not been able to overcome or suppress his light, even among the heathen. But the incarnation has concentrated his

\* Delivered at the Second Conference, held at the Mathewson Street Methodist Episcopal Church, November 11, 1903.

rays. Better even than Moses and the Law are the grace and truth revealed in Jesus of Nazareth.

There is opposition to Christ, but this very opposition is a proof of Christ's deity. Sin must resist holiness; selfishness must resist love. Holiness and love, however, will attract to themselves their like. There will be increasing faith on the part of some, though there is increasing unbelief on the part of others. Hence this Gospel is the record of two opposing tendencies. God's self-manifestation in Christ stirs up hatred that brings the Savior to the Cross, but it also awakens love that ensures the triumph of his kingdom. Side by side with the growing opposition on the part of the Jews is the growing devotion of Christ's disciples. They have every worldly example and inducement to forsake him. When they do yield to his claims and recognize his authority, the victory is won, the demonstration is complete, the thesis is proved. And this point is reached when Thomas, the most skeptical of the apostles, is moved after Jesus' resurrection to bow at his feet and cry: "My Lord and my God!" This is the proper end of the Gospel, and all that follows in the last chapter is only a supplement, designed to show why it was that John's service upon earth lasted so much longer than Peter's.

The progressive revelation of Christ's glory—this is the central theme of the Fourth Gospel. The first chapter, in which the thesis is stated and the witness of John the Baptist is given, is naturally followed by the second chapter, in which Christ manifests his glory, first by turning water into wine, and secondly by driving the traders out of the temple. There is an organic connection between the first chapter and the second which forbids us to regard the sublime declarations of the first chapter as of later authorship. The glory is declared in chapter one; the glory is manifested in chapter two. John, the protector and adopted son of Mary the Virgin, is the natural custodian and narrator of the miracle of Cana—a miracle wrought within a family circle, and therefore either unknown to the other evangelists, or seeming to them outside the range of Jesus' official ministry—an evidence that this Fourth Gospel had John for its author.

That this beginning of miracles was wrought in so humble a sphere is quite of a piece with the general plan of Christ—his kingdom did not come with observation. He was not born at Rome, but at Bethlehem; his crown was not of gold, but of thorns. He shows us what true glory is; self-abnegation reveals God best; to him the cross was a lifting up. Not among "the people", or "the world", was this wonder performed, but in the narrow circle of the family. Though he had just come from his baptism into death and from his struggle with infernal powers in the wilderness, he begins his ministry with no sounding of trumpets or clangor of arms. Instead of this, he enters sympathetically and joyously into the humble and common life of men, helping the poor, increasing their joy, consecrating their marriage.

The simplicity of the story carries conviction of its truth. The late arrival of Jesus and of his newly chosen disciples increased unexpectedly



the number of the guests. The mother, who had been already on the ground, perceived that the resources of the household were exhausted and that the married pair were exposed to embarrassment. With expectations, long suppressed, but newly awakened by reports of the Baptist's recognition of her Son at the Jordan, expectations of some revelation of his power, she whispered to him that "they have no wine". It is an intrusion of her motherly influence into a sphere that is above her. Jesus gently puts aside all authority but that of his mission and of the God who sent him. But at the same time he shows that Mary's expectations were not irrational, for he furnishes wine, and in such abundance that it serves as a symbol of the royal generosity of the gifts of God.

Why should we think of the story as merely a parable? All interpretations that ignore the miraculous element are even more far fetched and incredible than the miracle itself would be. "Jesus' conversation was so entertaining that the guests said: What good wine we have had!" All this is to contradict the plain teaching of the narrative. The evangelist evidently intended to describe a miracle. The testimony of the servants shows what was in the jars; the testimony of the ruler of the feast shows what it has become. The "filling to the brim" has no meaning, unless it is meant that the contents of all the six water-pots was changed to wine. The very superfluity of the provision was necessary to justify the solemn conclusion of the account: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory: and his disciples believed on him".

What was this glory, which the miracle made manifest? It was three-fold, and, in each of its three aspects, it had to do with nature, and with Christ's relation to nature. It was, first of all, the glory of Christ as the Life of Nature. We constantly tend to an atheistic and unchristian view of nature. We think of it as self-originated, as sufficient to itself, as independent of God. This miracle shows us on the contrary that nature is only the expression of the divine mind and will, and that this divine mind and will is the mind and will of Jesus Christ. He who created the universe has not abandoned the universe. Our gospel designates Christ's creative activity not by the preposition *upo*, "by", but by the preposition *dia*, "through". Creation is not the work of an absent, but of a present, Christ. And so with preservation. Only through his constant activity do the forces and laws of the universe maintain their existence. Matter is not dead but living, and it is Christ who upholds all things by the word of his power. And so we, who believe in Christ,

"Behind creation's throbbing screen  
Catch movements of the great Unseen".

If all that has come into being is, as our gospel says, "life in him", then nature is plastic in the hand of Christ. His will is a free will. He is not an Ixion, bound to nature's wheel. He is nature's Lord. Hence it follows, secondly, that the glory which this miracle manifests is the glory of Christ as the Ennobler of Nature. He is not the victim of a past process. He adds to the process, and the successive additions from his living energy are

the secret of evolution ; indeed, no growth or progress is conceivable, until we take into account some intelligent and beneficent agent behind or within the process, who is reinforcing and guiding it to a preordained and rational end. If all growth and progress everywhere is the result of his activity, why should we hesitate to recognize his working here? In this miracle he simply shows the inner possibilities of nature, since it is under his control. He can subject it to the needs of man. The turning of water into wine is a prophecy of the transformation of this mortal body into the spiritual body, and of the coming of the new heaven and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

For this glory is the glory of Christ, not simply as the Life of Nature, and as the Ennobler of Nature, but as the Interpreter of Nature. All Christ's miracles were signs of something higher than themselves. This Fourth Gospel is especially concerned to point out the symbolism of Jesus' works. He opens the eyes of the blind, to show that he is the Light of the World ; he multiplies the loaves, to show that he is the Bread of Life ; He raises the dead, to show that he lifts men up from the death of trespasses and sins. The universe is moral and religious at its core. The progress is a progress toward the good, the better, the best. Present commonness, and even imperfection, is no measure of the final result. He who made the world is in the world, to counteract the evil and to cherish the good. Want, the effect of sin, is to be done away. Separation and isolation, such as an accusing conscience brings about, are to give place to a holy society. Love and joy are to prevail, such love and joy as springs from virtue and the fear of God. All this is to begin in humble spheres and from them to spread through all the world. Water is but the basis and foundation for wine, and the world that now is is but the preparation for the world that is to come.

But we cannot leave this first miracle without a further consideration of the philosophy of miracles in general. We must grant that the old conception of the miracle as a violation or suspension of natural law, has been superseded by a new conception of the miracle, as belonging to a higher order of nature—an order previously existing indeed, but unknown to men before. Miracle, then, is like the eclipse of the sun, whose rareness attracts attention, but is not unnatural ; like the cathedral clock, whose bell rings only at the advent of a new century ; like the action of the calculating machine, which presents to the observer in regular succession the series of units from one to ten million, but which then makes a leap and shows, not ten million and one, but a hundred million. The extraordinary and unique may nevertheless be the operation of a law of nature. The blossoming of the century plant is something very unlike its former flowerless condition ; no human being may ever have seen it blossom before ; yet the provision therefor is in the plant from the beginning.

The burning of the Windsor Hotel in New York City is thought to have been due to the gradual charring of the woodwork and to superheated steam pipes. The temperature rose imperceptibly, until the sudden addition

of a fraction of a degree changed heat into flame. The ellipticity of the earth's orbit might go on increasing by regular gradations until centrifugal force overbalanced the centripetal, and the earth from being a planet might suddenly become a comet, yet this change might be perfectly natural. There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the philosophy of the ordinary scientist. Now miracle in a similar manner may be, and probably is, the operation of a law hitherto unknown to men, yet entirely within the range of natural forces, when once these natural forces are understood.

I say, when once these natural forces are fully understood. But these natural forces are never fully understood until they are recognized as divine. For matter is really spirit, and nature is only another name for God. The laws of nature are the habits of God. It is not true that God is the author of the miracle only in the sense that he instituted the laws of nature at the beginning, and provided that, at the appropriate time, miracle should be their outcome. This view fails to recognize in the miracle any immediate exercise of will. It also regards nature as a mere machine, which can operate apart from God—a purely deistic method of conception. If, however, we interpret nature dynamically, rather than mechanically, and regard it as the regular working of the divine will, instead of the automatic action of a machine, we may regard miracle as a perfectly natural phenomenon, while yet we see in it the action of a present and personal God. There is no such hard and fast line between the natural and the supernatural as some apologists have imagined. With the qualifications already suggested, we may adopt the dictum of Biedermann: "Everything is miracle,—therefore faith sees God everywhere; nothing is miracle,—therefore science sees God nowhere".

"The Hebrew historian or prophet regarded miracles as only the emergence into sensible experience of that divine force which was all along, though invisibly, controlling the course of nature". So says the Bishop of Southampton, and he speaks wisely. This principle throws new light upon many difficult narratives of Scripture. Miracle is an immediate operation of God; but, since all natural processes are also immediate operations of God, we do not need to deny the use of the natural processes, so far as they will go, in miracle. Such wonders of the Old Testament as the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, the partings of the Red Sea and of the Jordan, the calling down of fire from heaven by Elijah, and the destruction of the army of Sennacherib, are none the less works of God, when regarded as wrought by the use of natural means. At Cana Jesus took water to make wine, and on the hill-side of Galilee he took the five loaves to make bread, just as in ten thousand vineyards to-day he is turning the moisture of the earth into the juice of the grape, and in ten thousand fields is turning carbon into corn.

I do not hesitate to express my belief that all miracle has its natural side, though we may not be able to discern it. Recent investigations show the possibility of influence of mind upon body which go far toward explaining many of the cures of blindness, deafness, and paralysis, which meet us



in the gospel narrative. The virgin-birth of Christ may be an extreme instance of parthenogenesis, which Professor Loeb has demonstrated to take place in other than the lowest forms of life, and which he believes to be possible in all. Christ's resurrection may be an illustration of the power of the normal and perfect spirit to take to itself a proper body, and so may be the type and prophecy of that great change when we too shall lay down our own life and shall take it again. The scientist will yet find that his disbelief is not only disbelief in Christ, but also disbelief in science. Even though all miracle were proved to be a working of nature, the Christian argument would not one whit be weakened, for still miracle would evidence the extraordinary working of the immanent God, who is none other than Jesus Christ, and the impartation of his knowledge to the prophet or apostle who was his instrument.

Our unreadiness to accept this naturalistic interpretation of the miracle results wholly from our inveterate habit of dissociating nature from God, and of practically banishing God from his universe. This is the method of modern science, and since science deals with phenomena and not with their causes, science has its rights, and we cannot require it to enter a foreign field. But there is another field which belongs to religion, and the scientist is narrow and prejudiced who denies the existence of realities that are behind the phenomena. In his Commentary on Isaiah 33 : 14, George Adam Smith explains the passage: "Who among us can dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?" He tells us that the prophet had no thought of future punishment here. It was the present retributions of divine justice that he had in mind—those retributions that the wicked ignore or deny. If you look at a great conflagration, he says, through a smoked glass, you can see the bricks falling and the walls collapsing, but you cannot see the fire. We may use the illustration for the subject before us. Physical science looks at the universe through a smoked glass. It sees phenomena, but not the cause of them; it sees the sequences of nature, but not God. There is no antagonism between its view and that of religion—the two are simply complements of each other. Faith looks at the universe without the needless intervention of a smoked glass. Faith sees all that science sees, but it sees also the divine agency. It sees not only the falling bricks, but it sees also the fire. And so it can recognize the natural element in the miracle, while yet it recognizes in it the extraordinary agency and wonder-working power of God.

Those who see in Christ none other than the immanent God, manifested to creatures, find in this fact the explanation and the guarantee of his miraculous working. The Logos or divine Reason, who is the principle of all growth and evolution, can make God known to finite creatures only by successive new impartations of his energy. Since all progress implies increment, and Christ is the only source of life, the whole history of creation is a witness to the possibility of miracle. Every rational step already taken proves that other steps may follow. Miracle is not only possible but probable, for the reason that Christ is the Moral Reason of the world, as well as

its Intellectual Reason. The disturbances of the world-order which are due to sin are the matters which most deeply affect him. Christ, the life of the whole system and of humanity as well, must suffer; and, since we have evidence that he is merciful as well as just, we have the strongest of reasons for believing that he will rectify the evil by extraordinary means when merely ordinary means do not avail.

The miracle of Cana would not have been wrought if there had not been need of it. It was needed as a proof that Christ is the Life of Nature, the Ennobler of Nature, the Interpreter of Nature. It taught that he recognized the needs of the world and that he had come to supply them, not in man's time but in his own time, with such gradualness and in such proportion as best evince the wisdom and the munificence of God. He has come to make all things new, to make sacred every common relation of life, to turn earth into heaven. But he will do this through his own natural forces and laws. Every new manifestation of his power shall lay hold of and build upon and develop that which already exists, even as he uses the water to make wine. And these transformations of the lower into the higher have only just begun. Cana reveals the plan of Christ as a plan of evolution. After Law comes Gospel. After labor and sorrow and pain and tears come rest and reward and rejoicing and life forevermore. Sin gives its brief enjoyments at the first, and afterwards brings remorse and ruin. But Christ's gifts are ever increasing in richness and profusion. He keeps his best wine to the last.

May I sum up what I have said by a definition of the miracle? A miracle is an event in nature so extraordinary in itself and so coinciding with the prophecy or command of a religious teacher or leader as fully to warrant the conviction, on the part of those who witness it, that God has wrought it with the design of certifying that this teacher or leader has been commissioned by him. This definition has certain marked advantages over those that have been commonly accepted. It recognizes the immanence of God and his immediate agency in nature, instead of assuming an antithesis between the laws of nature and the will of God. It regards the miracle as simply an extraordinary act of that same God who is already present in all natural operations, and who in them is revealing his general plan. It holds that natural law, as the method of God's regular activity, in no way precludes unique exertions of his power when these will best secure his purpose in creation. It leaves it possible that all miracles may have their natural explanations and may hereafter be traced to natural causes, while both miracles and natural causes may be only other names for the one and self-same will of God. It reconciles the claims of both science and religion: of science, by permitting any possible or probable physical antecedents of the miracle; of religion, by maintaining that these very antecedents, together with the miracle itself, are to be interpreted as signs of God's special commission to him under whose teaching or leadership the miracle is wrought.

We are afflicted with a mental and moral astigmatism which sees a

single point or truth as if it were two. We see God and man, divine sovereignty and human freedom, Christ's divine nature and Christ's human nature, the natural and the supernatural, respectively, as two disconnected facts, when deeper insight would see but one. Astronomy has its centripetal and centrifugal forces, yet they are doubtless one force. The child cannot hold two oranges at once in its little hand. Our tendency to double vision should be corrected by Old Testament revelation, for that intimates that, in perfect consistency with the operation of natural law, the God of glory thundereth and in the heavens God himself is speaking with the living voice. The miracle of Cana is a New Testament corrective of our mental and moral astigmatism, for here Christ shows himself to be the Life of Nature, the Ennobler of Nature, the Interpreter of Nature, as only he can be who, as the Fourth Gospel declares, was in the beginning with God, and was himself God. To a transcendent and divine Personality miracle and nature are one.



## \* JESUS AND NICODEMUS — THE NEW BIRTH.

(ST. JOHN 3 : 1-15.)

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In order to a correct understanding of the story of Jesus and Nicodemus it is necessary to bear in mind that the Jewish commonwealth was a combination of church and state, presenting an ideal, an object lesson, of that coming Kingdom of God, when church and state, long separated, shall be united in a homogeneous whole. One and the same code of laws answered the purpose of both the civil and the ecclesiastical sides of the Jewish national life. Of almost equal authority with its written law were its unwritten traditions. It was one of the distinctions of the party known as the Pharisees that they attached the greatest importance to tradition, and enforced it with the utmost scrupulosity as regarded doctrine, ritual and life. Accompanying this academic rigor was often a practical selfishness, insincerity and superficiality. And Nicodemus was a Pharisee.

Nicodemus appears only in the Gospel of St. John, and he appears in that Gospel only three times; once in the interview with Jesus; once when he protested against condemning Jesus without a trial; and once again when he came with Joseph of Arimathea, bearing an hundred weight of spices to anoint the body of the Saviour when taken from the Cross, and so to aid in preparing it for burial. The interview with Nicodemus alone concerns us this morning.

Nicodemus was also a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin. As a rule the members of the Sanhedrin were scholars of authority, theologians, teachers of the law; constituting a supreme court at Jerusalem before whom all cases arising under the law were brought for judgment.

With this preliminary picture we are prepared to understand the scene about to be described, which took place at Jerusalem soon after that miracle in Cana of Galilee which has been the basis of discussion this morning. In the language of the Revised Version the brief story of the interview of Nicodemus with our Lord is as follows [St. John 3 : 1-15].

In all probability the actual words of our Saviour end with the fifteenth verse. There follows immediately that noble epitome of the whole gospel of the Incarnation, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." But in the opinion of scholars this is a direct declaration of the author of the gospel, pieced on to the narrative of the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, and not a part of the interview itself.

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\* Delivered at the Second Conference, held at the Mathewson Street Methodist Episcopal Church, November 11, 1903.

Now let us for a moment pause in order to form in imagination, if possible, a legitimate picture of the scene itself. It is in Jerusalem, at the crowded time of the Passover, when the streets are full of the Hebrew people. It is night. It is not improbably a windy night, and the gusts that sweep over Judea and Jerusalem are tearing to and fro in the streets of the city. Under the cover of darkness, this Nicodemus, an old man, I think, wends his silent and unperceived way to the house where Jesus of Nazareth is staying. It seems hardly probable, as has been suggested by some students, that it was the house of John, the author of this gospel. At the time of the crucifixion our Lord did commit His mother to the care of John, and John took her, as the King James Version says, "to his own home." But the word "home" is not in the original, and it is not necessary to suppose that at this time the author of the gospel had a "home" of his own in Jerusalem at which Jesus stayed. Whatever was the house, we can safely and accurately imagine that there was a stairway leading up on the outside of it, as was not uncommon in the houses of the East, to the upper room, which, as the guest chamber, would be the place where the Lord would be found. Nicodemus, ascending this outside stair, could reach the apartment where Jesus was without attracting the attention of the people in the house, so that both architecture and darkness favored the privacy of his visit.

But why by night? There is danger that the intimations given in some other parts of John's Gospel of "doors shut" for fear of the Jews should apply to this adventure, and that it should be inferred that Nicodemus came by night through fear. There is no authority for that interpretation, though it may be true. Let us not label Nicodemus with the word coward when there is nothing in the narrative except the simple fact that he came by night, to indicate that fear had anything to do with his steps. I fancy that if you wanted to see your pastor upon a confidential errand, you might very likely go to him at night when the duties and interruptions of the day were at their lowest ebb, and when perhaps you might be more likely to find him unengaged.

At any rate, it was at night that Nicodemus went, and found the Saviour in the room where He was lodging. You can imagine that it did take something of moral courage on the part of this venerable Hebrew, this Pharisee, this judge upon the supreme bench, to seek a private interview with the man from Galilee, whose unique personality, whose unparalleled teachings, the beginning of whose wonder-working manifestations of His glory had already excited such a sensation, and aroused such a hubbub of excitement and discussion among the Hebrew people. It costs something to interview a man who is under suspicion. St. Paul in his prison abode remembers with a grateful heart the man who is called Onesiphorus, because when he was a prisoner at Rome and this man was visiting there he had sought Paul out, and was not afraid of his bonds. Nicodemus was not afraid of the bonds of the Master.

Notice also that he comes with a confession. The miracle at Cana of Galilee had acquired notoriety at Jerusalem; and probably other miracles

had been wrought not here recorded. Evidently Nicodemus does not stand alone in his confession, for he says: "*We* know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him". It was a joint confession in which he spoke for others as well as for himself. It was also a compromised confession, a limited confession, a confession with reservations. All that it said was, "we know that Thou art a teacher"; yet that was a good deal for a member of the Sanhedrin to say. "We know that Thou art a teacher come from God", was a great deal more for a man in his position to say.

Now the Saviour, instead of meeting this confession as most persons would have met it, met it as He often met such; gives no attention apparently to the question or remark that had been addressed to Him by His interlocutor, but deftly and effectively turns the mind of His interlocutor to an entirely different point. Here comes a venerable Hebrew, a Pharisee, a judge on the supreme bench, but by the Saviour all he says is brushed aside with the words, "Except a man be born again he cannot *see* the Kingdom of God". With one stroke He puts Nicodemus outside the pale.

Then comes the question, "How can a man be born again?" It is like Pilate's question, "What is truth?" It may have been ironical, sarcastic, contemptuous or sincere, or a little of each and all. "How can a man be born when he is old?" How can a man be born again when he is an old man like me, stooped, grey-headed, and trembling of foot, as I have found my way up these stairs? The Saviour seems to pay no attention to this question, for in His second declaration He passes right by it and fixes His mind and words upon a spot beyond the place, even, where He had planted His foot in His first answer. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot *enter* into the Kingdom of God".

Put these two answers side by side and note the progress in the Saviour's thought from the one to the other. In one case it is, "Except a man be born [from above] he cannot *see* the Kingdom of God"; in the other it is, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot *enter* into the Kingdom of God". Spiritual *perception* is one thing, spiritual *experience* is another. Unless a man be born from above [of the Spirit], and of water as well, he can neither see, through his perceptions, what the Kingdom of God is, nor in his experience can he know or enter into the Kingdom of God as a real condition of his life.

Now, what does our Saviour mean by the distinction that He draws here between baptism of the Spirit and baptism with water? What does He mean by "being born of water and the Spirit"? I know that this is an interdenominational meeting. I am probably speaking to those who call themselves Baptists or Methodists or Congregationalists or Episcopalians. I hope nothing I say will exceed the courtesy that a speaker should show in such an assembly as this, or that it will offend or wound or distress the sensibilities of any brother or sister who does me the honor to listen to what I have to say. But I want to say here unequivocally, unhesitatingly, and with-



out the slightest room for doubt in regard to my meaning, that I believe in baptismal regeneration. Baptism is a covenant between God and the human soul. There is a human side to it, and there is a divine side to it, and the divine and the human must coincide to make the perfect baptism, which is the outward and visible sign of the inward and invisible birth. That is baptism; and what is baptism? It is an outward and visible application of a medium appointed by our Lord Himself, accompanying an inward and invisible operation of the divine spirit promised by God Himself. That is baptism, and such baptism is not only an indication, it is a means, when it is used in faith, of the new birth. Those who have conformed to the outward and visible sign have a right to expect the inward and invisible grace, and that is the literal and spiritual philosophy of that being born of the Spirit and of water which our Saviour lays down to Nicodemus as the preliminary condition not only of seeing but entering into the Kingdom of God.

There are three foundation doctrines in so much of the Gospel of John as this Conference has proceeded with in its consideration this morning. The first is the Incarnation, God manifest in the flesh, and the world will never outgrow the doctrine of the incarnation. Men deride it, and dispute it, and condemn it, and forsake it, but it is of the nature of the universe. The second is the Atonement. On the foundation of the Incarnation rises the second great doctrine of the Gospel of John. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world". The doctrine may be repudiated, minimized and rejected, but there will ever remain the sacrificial atonement of the Son of God for the sin of the world. And the next great doctrine in this spiritual ascent is that of the new birth. It has a logical connection with the others, it grows out of the others, it is essential for the realization of the others. God manifest in Jesus Christ, the sacrificial Lamb of Calvary, and the new birth from above by the Spirit, with an outward sign of the washing of regeneration by which the soul is restored to the kingdom to which by sin it had been lost. Those are the three fundamental doctrines of St. John's Gospel.

There are four courses to take with certain difficult passages in the gospels of which we have examples before us in our study to-day: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God"; "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God". We can say, "I do not believe Jesus Christ ever said such a thing"; "that saying is a fiction; it sprang up in the mind of a deluded enthusiast fifty years after the Saviour had come and gone". A great many people do dispose of such sayings in that way; it is a very easy way to dispose of them; yet for one, I do not feel at liberty to take refuge in that method. The second course is to say: "Yes, the narrative is authentic, our Saviour said what He was reported to have said, but He was mistaken. He was honest, sincere, but acting under an hallucination, as other men often do". Well, there are those who comfort themselves with such a refuge as that; but I reject it, for I do not believe our Lord was a mistaken man. The third

course is to admit that our Saviour said what He was reported to have said, and that He was perfectly sane, but that He was an imposter, a quack, a mountebank, a pretender who traded on the fears and superstitions of an ignorant and half-barbaric people, knowing all the time that He was making pretentions which had no foundation. There are those who accept that explanation, but I reject it. There remains only one other course open. Our Saviour said precisely what He is reported to have said; He was a sane man; He was an honest man, and He is to be believed. My character and my life are to be conformed to His teaching, and if I fail to do it, I must take the consequences. That method of disposing of these difficult passages I heartily accept.

## \* ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH BELIEF.

(ST. JOHN 3:14-21.)

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In studying the Gospel of John we find the teaching that eternal life comes through belief. We are led therefore, to examine the statements of this Gospel in regard to three inquiries:

First. What is eternal life?

Second. What is the belief, or the believing, through which eternal life comes?

Third. Why eternal life comes through belief?

It seems requisite, moreover, that some considerations should be presented with a view to clear these teachings of this Gospel from misapprehension and objection, and to show their reasonableness and importance.

I. What is eternal life?

1. Eternal life is that blessed condition of existence of the soul of man in its relation to God, which is set forth in contrast with another condition in which the soul is described as abiding under the wrath of God, abiding in darkness, and which involves such loss of good that the soul, though immortal, is said to perish. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:14, 15). "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (3:36). "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness" (12:46).

2. Eternal life is a certain kind of practical and affectionate acquaintance with God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, which men may have through the aid of the Holy Spirit. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent" (17:3). "Except a man be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (3:5).

3. Eternal life is that happy relationship with God which men may have as a gift from Christ which He came into the world to impart. "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life" (10:27, 28). "Father, glorify Thy Son that Thy Son also may glorify Thee, as Thou has given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him" (17:1, 2). "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (10:10).

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\* Delivered at the Second Conference, held at the Mathewson Street Methodist Episcopal Church, November 11, 1903.



4. Eternal life is that precious relationship with God which men may have as a present possession. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (3:36). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (5:24).

5. Eternal life is that glorious relationship with God which men may have as an inalienable possession. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone pluck them out of My hand" (10:28).

II. What is the belief,—the believing,—through which eternal life comes?

It is that act of the individual soul by which it recognizes and honors the claims of Christ, accepts and confides in His offices as the One sent by God to give eternal life to all who thus entrust themselves to His care. Thus the phrase, "believing in Christ" is used as synonymous with receiving Christ as the One by whom we, who have rebelled against God, may be reinstated in filial relations to Him. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power, (or the right) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (1:12).

Again the phrase is used as meaning the same as obeying Christ. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, but he that obeyeth not the Son (revised version) shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (3:36).

So Martha recognized the claim of Jesus as the Christ, the anointed deliverer, and said to Him: "Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (11:27). To the Samaritan woman her townsmen said: "Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (John 4:42).

These teachings are well paraphrased in that admirable definition of believing in Christ, by the late Dr. Joseph Cook: "Saving faith is the affectionate choice of Jesus Christ as both Saviour and Lord". This implies a penitential confession that as sinners we need Him as a Saviour, and that as subjects we bow to His righteous rule, and engage to obey His commands.

III. The third inquiry, why eternal life comes through believing, has its answer in the statements made in this Gospel concerning the merciful mission of Christ. Since "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (3:16), it follows that the first, most manifest and urgent duty for all who know this is to receive and welcome, accept and trust the Saviour whom God sent into the world "that the world through Him might be saved" (3:17). So when men inquired of Jesus, What shall we do that we might work the works of God, He answered: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (6:28, 29). The Saviour taught that men had such evidence of His divine mission in His life-giving words, and in His miraculous deeds, that not to believe on Him

showed them to be ungrateful and perverse. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life" (6:63). "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin. If I had not done among them the works that none other man did, they had not had sin, but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father" (15:22-24). "Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and know that Thou art the Holy One of God" (6:68, 69). On another occasion as recorded by Matthew, Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, blessed art thou, Simon, Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 16:16, 17).

IV. Having thus set forth the plain teachings of this Gospel on eternal life through belief, or believing, it seems proper, in view of the frequent misapprehensions concerning these teachings, and the numerous objections to them, to add some remarks to show their reasonableness and importance.

1. God's great love and mercy are specially apparent in His giving us eternal life on such an easy and simple condition. We are simply to turn away from everything wrong, and in loving trust look to the Saviour God has provided, and try to follow Him. We are not now "under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14); *i. e.*, we are not under the law as a rule of judgment, although we are still under the law as a rule of action. God has not repealed His law, which is "holy, just and good", and as His "commandment is exceeding broad", "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight" (Rom. 4:20). But, since Christ has died and "borne our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24), God is enabled to exercise His infinite compassion towards us, and to accept from us, instead of the perfect obedience which the law demands, an imperfect degree of obedience, if it is of the right kind; if it is that humble, penitent, loving spirit, which is implied in the act of entrusting our souls to Christ, as our Advocate and Redeemer.

Many years ago, when a certain brilliant young philanthropist was in charge of the New York Independent, he wrote an editorial inveighing against creeds, declaring it very immaterial what a man believes if he only lives right. "There is one simple way of salvation", he said: "Let a man live according to the Sermon on the Mount and he will be saved". "So he will," the clear-seeing president of a western college responded in a conclusive reply; "but no man ever yet lived up to that standard, which says: 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect'. And if that is the rule of judgment every soul of man is forever cut off from all hope of salvation".

2. To condition eternal life on belief, or believing, furnishes one of the best tests of character. Belief means, in this connection, as we have seen, not the things believed apart by themselves, but the act of the person believing, and that act of believing, which is a requisite for eternal life, is

always a moral act, an affectionate choice of Jesus Christ as both Saviour and Lord.

This is not as some allege, making eternal life depend on a merely intellectual assent to the truth of a certain set of theological propositions, even about the person and work of Christ; a kind of an assent which may have no decisive connection with character. I may be compelled to believe in the newly discovered properties of matter, the wonderful powers of certain substances as sources of light and heat. But this belief does not seem at present to have any direct bearing on my conduct or to appeal to me for any specific action.

Some objectors speak as if we teach that certain beliefs held in the understanding act as a talisman; as if one who has the catechism in his mind is thereby qualified to enter into life. A parent applies to the school authorities and gets a permit for his child to enter the public school. With this in his hand the child secures an entrance, though he knows little of the terms of admission, perhaps cannot read the permit. A good creed in a man's head does not give him entrance into life. It does not necessarily make him a good man or give him a right character. It tends to do so, for all truth has an inherent impelling power. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness" (Rom. 10:10). The question of intellectual assent to the creed depends on the evidence presented. If the evidence is sufficient, assent is compelled. It is not optional with a man to believe it or not. He cannot help it. "The devils also believe and tremble" (James 2:19). The question is, does he yield to the constraining force of that truth upon his affections and his will? Does he accept it as the rule of his own life, and govern himself accordingly?

Now, when Christ bids us believe in Him, if His claims are clearly seen and we are convinced that He is what He says He is, the appeal He makes for our confidence, our loving trust, is the most powerful appeal possible. For God in Christ is the supreme revelation of the divine character. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). If one is willing to do right he will gladly respond to this appeal by accepting Christ and confiding all his interests to His loving care.

3. To require belief as a condition of receiving eternal life is reasonable, because the essential element in the believing required is only the love due from every sincere soul to the highest excellence known.

It is only in so far as Christ is revealed to us in His true character that we are required to believe in Him. Some years ago I was present at a symposium on "The Meeting of the Extremes", in the parlors of the late Rev. Dr. Joseph Cook, when a distinguished philanthropist, who rejects the Christian system, said: "You call us unbelievers, when in fact we believe more than you do". He named a number of things concerning the capabilities and prospects of the soul of man which are not included in the Christian belief. The reply was made, that it is not the number of propo-



sitions believed that entitles one to be called a believer by way of eminence, but the dignity of the propositions, and the directness and power of their bearing on the practical issues of life.

And when we consider it, could there be a proposition submitted to the apprehension of man for his belief more commanding, or more potent for good if true, than the statement that He from whose creative hand the planets rolled, in the day "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy", stooped so low as here on this atom of a world to be born a babe and lie in the arms of a human mother, to be nailed to the cross in expiation for the sins of the world, to rise from the dead and bid His followers go forth and disciple all nations, saying: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world"; and that He will then sit on His judgment throne and before Him shall be gathered all nations to receive from His hands the final awards for the things done in the body. The person who believes that, and joyfully throws all his interests for time and eternity into the keeping of this Almighty Redeemer, all history has persisted in calling preeminently a believer, and is warranted in doing so. Indeed, our Lord himself bestows this title on His disciples, referring to them again and again, by a tender diminutive, expressive of endearment, as "these little ones that believe in Me".

But the objector further said, "We are not to be blamed for rejecting this belief. We simply have no capacity for entertaining it". He illustrated their incapacity by the replies two little children playing on their father's lawn said they gave to a tramp who demanded their money. One said, "We haven't any". The other added: "We haven't any pockets".

In response to this, reference was made to the fishes in the waters of Mammoth Cave that had so long kept away from the light that their eyelids are said to have grown together, and to the conceded fact that many a high faculty of the soul can be in a measure extirpated by disuse, as the great naturalist Mr. Darwin deplored his perception of spiritual values had been, to a lamentable degree.

There is also such a thing as "an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God" (Heb. 3:12). We have a natural disinclination to receive evidence that is likely to convict us of sin. The Saviour said: "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John 3:18-20). But whether by culpable negligence of evidence or not, it was manifest that the eminent doubter did not perceive the true relation to the world that Christ claims to hold. For he said: "I should never think of ending a prayer, 'for Plato's sake, amen'; nor 'for Emerson's sake', nor can I say 'for Jesus' sake, amen'". The Christian can say this, for he recognizes the offices of Christ as revealed to him in the Bible, and the Holy Spirit has so helped him to see Christ in these relations that he rests

his soul upon Him. This is in accordance with the promise Christ made, "When He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth. He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you" (John 16:13, 14). The believer reads: "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:5, 6). "If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:1, 2). Those whom Christ condemned for refusing to believe on Him were those to whom He had spoken and before whom He had proved His claims by doing "among them the works which none other man did", so that He could say: "Now they have no cloak for their sin" (John 15:22-24).

Seeing Christ, perceiving His righteous claims to our loving confidence, of course must come before believing in Christ, before giving Him our loving confidence. "This is the will of Him that sent Me", said Jesus. "that everyone that seeth the Son and believeth on Him, should have eternal life, and I will raise Him up at the last day" (John 6:40). Yet we are taught that "in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him" (Acts 10:35). We read: "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:5). One Lord whose atoning death alone makes it possible for the penitent to be forgiven. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me" (John 14:6). The apostle Peter, "filled with the Holy Ghost", said of Christ, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). "There is one faith", one simple act of loving, penitent, self-surrender to the best light the soul has, the same in essence in ancient saint and Christian Apostle, in Enoch and in John. Faith in God is love for God as trustworthy, "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10). "An atheist may be saved", Professor Park used to say, "if he is honest in his doubt, and sincerely follows the best light he can get". Who can doubt that Socrates would have joyfully accepted Christ if the world's Redeemer had been revealed to him? "There is one baptism", one orderly required way of confessing Christ when one has seen Him and believed on Him. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20).

The words of Professor Robert Flint of Edinboro are pertinent here. "In religion, as in every other department of thought and life, man is bound to regulate his belief by the simple but comprehensive principle that evidence is the measure of assent. Disbelief ought to be regulated by the same principle, for disbelief is belief; not the opposite of belief, but belief of the opposite. Unbelief is the opposite both of belief and disbelief. Ignorance is to unbelief what knowledge is to belief or disbelief. The whole

duty of man as to belief is to believe and disbelieve according to evidence, and neither to believe nor disbelieve when the evidence fails him". (Theism, p. 358).

With this agrees the statement of Archbishop Whately: "Disbelieving is believing, since to disbelieve any assertion is to believe its contradictory".

4. To insist on religious belief as a condition of eternal life is really to insist on religious life, since religious life is the response of the soul to the appeal of religious truth.

The familiar voice of a weak sciolism cries out, "No matter about a man's belief, religious life is the real need"; as if the latter could be had without the former; as if the latter were not always produced and determined by the former. All truth is related to life. Strictly, there is no abstract truth. Every conception of realities has an inherent impelling power. The voice of the multiplication table tells us of the harmonies of God's universe, with which it behooves us to be in accord. We look on the good Samaritan, and the scene says, "Go, and do thou likewise". "Religion", Professor Flint says, "is man's belief in a being or beings mightier than himself, and inaccessible to his senses, but not indifferent to his sentiments and actions, together with the feelings and practices which flow from such belief". (Anti-Theistic Theories, p. 259.) Hence the belief is the governing constituent in all religion, indeed in all character. A man is always what he is made by his belief, not always by what he says he holds, but by what his life says holds him, the principles and doctrines which he accepts as his rule of action and which govern his life. In practical affairs men acknowledge this. A man can't get a situation as a clerk in a store without an examination of his theological belief, if it is thought to be peculiar. A merchant says to a friend: "Do you know of a competent salesman I can get?" "Yes", the friend replies, "the brightest, most successful one I ever knew". "Send him round will you?" "Yes, only I ought to tell you his religious views are rather peculiar". "What has that to do with the matter?" "Well, he believes in the community of goods, that God's plan is for all property ultimately to be held in common; meanwhile, if one does not get his fair share he has a right to help himself". "Then I don't want him around my till", the merchant rejoins.

The genesis of religion is always the same: First, religious knowledge; secondly, religious feeling, awakened by the appeal of the truth that is seen; thirdly, religious action, or the choice to yield to the appeal of the truth, or to resist it. The virtue lies in the action of the will; that is always accompanied by emotion, but the sensibility and the will are both absolutely dependent on the conception of the truth by the intellect.

5. To regard belief or believing as a requisite for eternal life is a safer rule than to consider religious feeling as the clear sign of true religion, for unless religious feeling accords with correct views of truth, it is liable to be misleading, and indeed to be wholly wrong itself. There is no religion without emotion, but emotion is not religion. It must be regulated by a clear vision of the facts of the situation. Thus Professor Flint remarks:



"The heart must be appealed to and satisfied as well as the head, but not apart from or otherwise than through the head, or the appeal is sophistical and the satisfaction illegitimate. Our feelings largely determine whether we recognize and assent to reasons or not, but they ought not to be substituted for reasons, or even used to supplement reasons". He condemns "the sentimentalism which pleads feelings in deprecation of the rigid criticism of reasons, or in order to retain a conviction which it cannot logically justify". (Theism, p. 334).

Men often go wofully astray because they yield to the impulse of wrong feelings—feelings awakened by the lower instincts, or by a selfish and partial view of facts, while they shut their eyes to unwelcome truth, lest its stronger appeal should prove effectual.

A man is passionately enamored of a lady whom he desires to marry, but before he can make her acquaintance they are widely separated. Years pass, when they chance to meet. Suddenly the former impulse is upon him like a whirlwind. Learning immediately, however, that she is now married, instantly, as an honorable man, he stifles the feeling, obeying rather the impulses awakened by this wider knowledge of the facts of the case.

A man says: "Some of the sayings of Jesus awaken repugnant feelings in my mind. I feel that they cannot be true". He is reminded that by many infallible proofs Jesus is accredited at the bar of our reason as a trustworthy witness, the light of the world, the truth. This fact, and the remembrance of our imperfect knowledge, our liability to prejudice under the blinding influence of our sin, and our natural aversion to admonitory truth, are considerations which appeal to him to yield a reverent acceptance to all the teachings of our Lord.

Those who regard their own feelings as a safe guide, notwithstanding the appeal to the contrary of attested truth, in rejecting certain parts of Christ's teaching as untrue, do not agree with each other what parts their feelings will allow to stand. Every man is to install his own feelings as the supreme authority in deciding what portions of the Word of God he will accept, what portions "find him", as he says, or approve themselves to his moral sensibilities. Thus the author of *The Christ of Today* says (p. 161): "The man who is full of the mind of Christ is dependent on no authority to declare to him the portions of his Bible that are truly the revelation of God: he has an unction from the Holy One, and understands for himself".

Some years ago an effort was made at a misnamed Church Congress at Hartford, to ascertain what parts of the Bible the feelings of certain liberal thinkers would agree in commending as worthy of belief. Paul's teaching they felt could be disregarded, but their feelings seemed hopelessly at variance on the question how much of Christ's teachings could safely be trusted. At length an eminent clergyman ended the discussion by stating that we must all become like the little child that Jesus set in the midst of His disciples and commended, for a child does not pretend to know anything about these mysteries. On their plan he was right; they were agnostics all, with as many Bibles as there were men, and none of them worth anything as a pillow for a dying bed.

6. To insist on religious belief as a pre-requisite to eternal life is precisely what is implied in the injunction to disciple all nations.

All the extensive operations of the various missionary societies for the prevalence of God's Kingdom over all the earth are simply an endeavor to carry to every man, everywhere, the message which the great missionary apostle gave to the Philippian jailer: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31). And all the efforts to produce more harmonious and efficient religious activities at home and abroad in bringing the world to Christ, can successfully proceed only on the principle that there must first be secured greater harmony of conviction in regard to the underlying truths involved. What precisely is the task to be done?

At a farewell meeting on the departure of a missionary sent by one of the liberal denominations to Japan, the distinct declaration was made: "We are not going out to convert the Japanese, but to confer with them, to promote an interchange of religious ideas". And upon this apostle of spiritual trading an educated native of that country, one of the speakers of the occasion, invoked the blessing of the eighty thousand gods of Japan.

At the meeting of the Second International Congregational Council in Boston in 1899, a distinguished guest, the head of Cambridge University, in discussing Christian unity and fellowship, attempted to show that the only union possible is "a moral unity, a unity of spirit, which is completely independent of creed". I am compelled to take issue squarely with that assertion, and to affirm, on the contrary, that there is no moral unity or unity of spirit possible except that which is founded on, and bounded by, an underlying unity of creed. The measure of harmony of spiritual life between persons and parties is absolutely and always determined by the measure of harmony in their creed. The gentleman further said that the ground of unity is a recognition of "the Christlike conduct of life". Indeed? And what is that? Mr. Gladstone, in his paper on Authority in Religion says, "The human mind is accustomed to play tricks with itself in every form, and one of the forms in which it most frequently resorts to this operation is when it attenuates the labor of thought, and evades the responsibility of definite decision, by the adoption of a general word that we purposely keep undefined to our own consciousness". "So", he says, "men admire the British constitution, without knowing or inquiring what it is, and profess Christianity but decline to say or think what it means".

Now to define "the Christlike conduct of life", so that it can serve as an intelligible basis for Christian unity, one must have some knowledge of Christ, and of the application of His teaching to our life. Such knowledge to be effective must be apprehended with some clearness, and if thus apprehended, it can be stated, and if stated it is a creed, and that creed governs the feelings and acts of the man who makes it his rule of life. The propagation of the Gospel does not imply that perfect agreement in all minor matters of belief is the end sought, but a substantial agreement in its essential truths. The great London preacher, the late Joseph Parker, once unfortunately said: "In the case of two men, two hundred, two thousand, two million, unity in mere opinion is not a miracle but an impossibility".

Yet millions upon millions passionately sing: "All hail the power of Jesus' name", and that shows they are cordially united in the opinions that He is Lord, and that sinners should "crown Him Lord of all". When Mr. Parker adds: "Opinion is necessarily and happily changeable", his confusion arises from spelling opinion with a capital O; for we must ask, What opinion? The opinion that there is a holy God, that man is a sinner, and that they must be reconciled to abide in peace together, are necessarily and happily unchangeable among Christians.

On the occasion referred to, President Eliot said: "Opinions and beliefs vary more and more, as knowledge advances and freedom grows". Nay, nay; for who was it who bade us "disciple all nations"? When He ascended on high and gave gifts unto men, why did He give "some to be apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, and pastors, and teachers"? Was it not "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, until we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ?"

7. To insist on belief as the condition of eternal life is the only way to produce strong characters, men of power in promoting the Kingdom of God. It has been a favorite plea of some that one cannot justly be required to believe any definite system of truth, because nothing of that kind is attainable. Christianity is casting aside its old forms, which, though false, were useful once, and putting on what is true to us now, but must in time be cast aside hereafter, for Christianity has no system of doctrine and never can have. Thus Stopford Brooke, in his volume on Christ in Modern Life, says: "Christ's religion never can be made into a system", and he remarks of his faith, "it holds all opinions and theories slightly, being ready to surrender them for higher truth". But a religious teacher who comes to his hearers saying: "As at present advised the case is thus and so, but I am pursuing my investigations, and I will keep you informed of my researches and of my doubts as well," is like a man standing on the quivering crust of a bog, shifting his footing all the time. He is in no condition to lift anything, or to strike an earnest blow, or to do anything but sink in the mire and drag others down with him. Forty-eight years ago, here in Brown University, Professor Lincoln gave me as my theme for a college oration, "Faith an Element of Eloquence", and he held up before me as a type of the men of power in all history the great apostle who said: "We believe and therefore speak". The Saviour prayed: "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth" (John 17:17), and the men who have made the world better have been men who have held the truth, and taught the truth as that on which the eternal life of the soul depends.

8. To insist on religious belief as a condition of eternal life greatly enhances our view of the importance of a full and clear presentation of the truth, and thus points out the chief difference between Christianity and the ethnic religions, a distinction wherein lies its superior power.

Max Müller, in his study of comparative religions, reaches the conclusion that there is some good in all religions, enough to save a man, if he



will follow the best light he has. These religions may lead men to repent, but none of them show how God can safely forgive them if they repent. That, the Christian religion alone reveals, and in that "piece of information" is the hiding of its power. "Christ, Christ crucified, is the wisdom and power of God" (1 Cor. 1:23, 24). Mr. Gladstone described the Christian religion as consisting not only of certain sacraments enshrining its leading and distinctive facts, and of a peculiar and superior system of morals, but also of a body of doctrine, whose center is the person and work of Christ. It is the lack of these characteristic truths of redemption which explains the comparative powerlessness of all other religions. Wendell Phillips said, "The answer to Confucianism is China, to Buddhism is India, to Mohammedanism is Turkey". Christianity is supplanting all other religions precisely because it alone is continually crying to all: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Allow me a personal allusion as I close. At family worship yesterday morning Mrs. Plumb reminded me that on the tenth of November, just forty-five years ago yesterday, I was ordained to the Christian ministry, and she accepted the position she has since held to my great satisfaction as my helper in my work. It was a precious recollection, and it recalled the fact that it was the voice of a Providence pastor, the saintly and sainted Dr. Leonard Swain, of the Central Church here, which then gave me the solemn charge to be faithful to my high calling. As we reviewed the past, it seemed to us that the one thing which has grown most upon our thoughts is the greatness of the love of Him who said: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36).

I was at a ministerial gathering lately where a prominent clergyman, in reading a paper, quoted a passage from the Gospel of John, and paused to say he was aware that this Gospel is not considered authentic, but in this case John agrees with the other Gospels, and so he ventured to quote him. Think of it! Apologizing for quoting from this Gospel, which has been called the heart of Christ! Such is not the spirit of this Conference.

I sometimes ask the children in the Sunday School who is the happiest man in the Bible? They know who is the strongest, the meekest, the oldest man. Can there be any question that the beloved disciple, who knew more of the heart of Christ than anyone else, who reclined at the last supper on the bosom of his Lord, was the most favored, the happiest man that ever breathed? And yet he said: "Greater joy have I none than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth" (3 John v. 4). In that joy, you, beloved brethren of this Conference, who have been here engaged in exalting the teaching of this holy apostle, will be permitted, through the happy results of your labors, to share. For these Conferences will assuredly result in securing in not a few cases, the object for which the apostle declares the Gospel was written. "And many other signs truly did Jesus which are not written in this book, but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name" (John 20:30, 31).

## \*THE OPTIMISM OF JESUS.

(ST. JOHN 4 : 1-42.)

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The fourth chapter of St. John reveals, as do few chapters of the New Testament, the optimism of Jesus. This optimism manifests itself in Christ as a soul winner, as a practical worker, and as a teacher.

I. *The Optimism of Christ as a soul winner.* Christ chose on two occasions a Samaritan to teach His greatest lessons; it was a Samaritan in the parable of true humanity which He selected to illustrate the spirit of brotherhood which the Jewish priest and Levite failed to express; it was to a Samaritan woman, a heretic in religion, a profligate in life, the most unpromising person possible to receive His message, that Christ promised the water of eternal life which should spring up forever in the soul. He came to be the Saviour of the world and He guaranteed to save to the uttermost. He came to call not the strong, the spiritually acute, the morally blameless, but the weak, the spiritually blind, the publican, the sinner and the outcast. He did not flinch at the hardest problem; serene and hopeful, He brought the blessings of His truth to the most lowly and the most sinful. His optimism was apparent in His belief that every man, however spiritually impoverished, *could* have and *should* have a religious experience, a personal appreciation and appropriation of the Gospel of the blessed God. Christ did not come to found a religion; the world was filled with religions, some dark and full of error, some bright and glistening with truth. Christ came to bring religious *life* to men. He was the last and greatest of the prophets of Israel who stood for justice, mercy, and the humble walk with God, in distinction from external obedience to forms and ceremonies, and the observance of fasts and feasts. Christianity is pure democracy. It assumes that men can and will, if properly inspired and instructed, bring their lives under the sway of religious ideals, laws, beatitudes. We sometimes ask the question whether political democracy is a failure, whether the history of republics bears out the expectations of great commoners that man is adapted to self-government. The optimist in politics is compelled to assert his faith in the face of many ugly facts which testify to man's indifference to his political rights and neglect of his civic duties. "How long will the American Union last?" said Guizot to James Russell Lowell. "It will exist", was the reply, "so long as the men of America hold to the fundamental principles of their fathers". That is all that the patriot can say and forthwith he proceeds to lift up his voice and proclaim with new vigor the fundamental principles of liberty which are public rights, and indi-

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vidual responsibility. Formal religion, priestcraft, superstitious fear, and pagan rites, baptized and called Christian, in every age of the church have summoned men away from the supreme truth of the New Testament, that man was made for God, and can appropriate God by penitence, faith, and obedience; in a word, that personal religion is every man's right and every man's duty. If the woman of Samaria could understand Christ's message, feel its power in her conscience, respond to it with loyal enthusiasm in her heart, then anyone can grasp the Gospel and take its healing message to his soul.

The supremely spiritual nature of Christ's gospel of light is seen in the emphasis which He puts upon *human testimony*. His gospel is for all, even the most sinful, and these can experience in their hearts eternal life. After the experience comes testimony. "I do not want to possess a religion", said Charles Kingsley, "I want a religion which will possess me". The gospel possessed the woman of Samaria, she proclaimed the glad news, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?" The people listened and her words brought them to Jesus. When they had come under the Master's influence, having felt the moving power of His words, and the charm of His benign spirit, they exclaimed to the woman, "Now we believe; not because of thy speaking; for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world" (R. V.).

This is the circle which is completed again and again in the life of the church as Christian disciples become soul winners; first the penitent at the feet of Christ, then the witnessing disciple, then the people believing in Jesus, each for himself accepting the truth, not on the authority of another, but because of the witness of Christ in his own soul. What does this all mean for the spiritual life of the church? It is Christ's seal upon the necessity of remembering that the Kingdom of God is to be advanced not by the iron might of dogma, nor by the power of priestly authority, nor by the impressiveness of an ecclesiastical organization, nor by the splendor of an imposing worship, but the Kingdom of God *is* to be advanced by faith, love and holiness, the graces of the Spirit, wrought into finished and beautified characters. The power of the church is not to be centered, but scattered. The disciples are first to become illumined, then to illumine, every man a bright and shining light, giving his light to the night, but giving also of his flame to torches of the world which else were dark, cold, dead.

II. *The Optimism of Christ as a Practical Worker.* When the disciples returned from the village they found Christ sitting alone by the well, the woman having left Him to return to her home. As He talked with them, across the wheat fields came the people of the city (v. 35), urged by the eager words of the woman: "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?" From the narrative it is generally supposed that it was in early December, four months before the harvest in April, and hence the significance of Christ's words to His disciples, "Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already



to harvest". The grain will not be harvested for four months, but a spiritual harvest is here; the people flocking through the fields show that it is at hand. The immediate application of these words was to the spiritual awakening which was begun by the conversion of the Samaritan woman and which was now shown to be full of promise for all, as the eager people sought the new Teacher.

Appropriate as are these words to the immediate evangelization of the Samaritans, Meyer maintains (against Godet) that reference is also made to "*all mankind* whose conversion begun by Christ would be accomplished by His disciples". Two things stand out in this passage which are valuable for all time. 1. There have been other sowers, the prophets, and all men of God who have wrought for righteousness, but Christ is the great sower of truth. Nowhere in the New Testament has the dignity of labor so perfect an illumination as in this conception of Jesus. The carpenter at the bench brings to the mind the Christ who entered into the common life of men, but the imagination dwells with peculiar delight on this higher figure of the *sower*, the Son of man moving down the ages scattering the precious grains of truth which shall surely spring up in the hearts of men. 2. Christ shows the hopeful and inspiring nature of His Gospel by putting the work of the Christian disciple not under the figure of sowing, but as Meyer says "under the cheerful image of *harvesting*". The Old Testament in the same way represents sowing as sorrowful, reaping as joyful; as in Isaiah 9: 3, "They joy before Thee according to the joy in harvest"; and Ps. 126: 6, "Though He goeth on His way weeping, bearing forth the seed; He shall come again with joy, bringing His sheaves with Him" (R. V.). Christ urges His disciples to become reapers in the field in which the truth has been sown and the ground prepared. The field is the heart of the world in which by discipline, by experience, by adversity, by the rude plough-shares of sorrow, bereavement, death, God is ever making ready for the ingathering of the ripened grain. "And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal".

III. *The Optimism of Christ as a Teacher.* Never man spake like this Man, for truly He was "the Teacher come from God". In His teaching in the fourth chapter of St. John, Christ presents a universal religion which annihilates all distinction of place and time, and levels all men in the presence of God, with whom there is no respect of persons. The Samaritan woman felt the searching of Christ's words as He revealed to her the secrets of her life, unknown, she thought, to any stranger, and she readily turned to the trite theological discussion of the relative merits of Jerusalem and Samaria as the center of religious power and authority. "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship". Jesus saith unto her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father, but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be His worshippers. God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (R. V.).

He annihilates all distinction of *time* in the true Kingdom of God. "The hour *cometh* and *now is*" when the true worshippers shall worship the Father. Now is always the accepted time. Truth is timeless. Duty is always now, "now", which Emerson calls the meeting point between two eternities. For purposes of thought and for the practical duties of life we distinguish epochs of time, but "you do not date holiness", says Dr. Parkhurst. Honor, self-sacrifice, love are not concerned with time any more than light has weight or fragrance color. So says St. John, "He that hath the Son hath life", *hath it now*. The hour of fulness of expression of that life will come in the future world, but the believer hath eternal life now as *really* and as *vitally* as he will ever possess it. But Christ's words, "The hour cometh and now is" show further the reason for His supreme confidence in the triumph of faith in a spiritual God. Christ was telling of the day when, in no favored centre, but everywhere, there would be spiritual worshippers of God, and He said, "The time cometh, and now is". "A new power", says President Harris, "had been introduced, a new cause for working, and, although the large results lay in the future, the cause, the power, was already in the life of darkened, sinning, erring humanity. He meant more than here and there already true worshippers could be found. \* \* \* A new hour strikes when the old order changeth. Before results become visible, the far-sighted seer says that the hour cometh, that the next century, the next generation, the next decade, will witness great changes. But the hour cometh because it now is. He foresees because he sees. The seer is he who sees. Foresight of the future is insight of the present".

The optimism of Christ as a teacher is seen further and chiefly in His teaching on the *nature of man*. This concerns His doctrine of sin and the grace of God. I know of no finer analysis of the Gospel of Christ in its bearing on these two cardinal truths of Christianity than is given by Auguste Sabatier in his "Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion". He says: "Christ did not construct a theory of man, of his moral life, any more than He constructed a theory with respect to God and the universe. He was content to place Himself at the centre of the human consciousness, and to dig down to the source of life. He takes man as he is in all climates and in all conditions. He does not declare him to be radically impotent for good, but neither does He flatter him by veiling his natural misery. He knows him to be ardent and feeble, full of needs and of illusions, capable of conversion, subject to passions, the victim of all slaveries. He treats him as diseased, which is the truth, and He does not think He can make him find the principle of serious cure save in the very sense of his malady". "He does not blunt the edge of the moral law but sharpens it". "He infinitely enhances the demands of the traditional ideal; from the outward act He descends to the inward feeling—He tells His disciples to love their enemies, to pray for those who persecute them, to answer violence by gentleness, injuries by love. This morality would easily become ascetic and appear impossible if it were not blended with an opposite element which renders it human and fruitful without either lowering or destroying it.

That element is mercy and forgiveness: it is pure, unconditional grace which in misery makes room for hope, and in repentance opens the door to faith and to the work of faith. These two elements, inexorable law and unconditional grace, are so intimately blended in the Gospel of Christ that the Gospel only subsists in its originality and with its power by their perfect fusion and reciprocal and constant action".

These glowing words reveal the true optimism of Christ regarding human nature and human destiny. That which makes an eminent physician is his skill in diagnosis. It avails nothing that modern science has discovered medicines and principles of treatment to arrest disease, if the particular malady challenging attention be not recognized. Jeremiah describes the criminal complacency of the prophets, priests, and leaders of his day, who "have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying peace, peace; when there is no peace". The hurt was "the shortcomings and sins of the nation", and the leaders were "like worthless surgeons. They refuse to examine or probe the wounds of those who are under their charge, and for the sake of their own ease, assure their patients that all is well". False optimism which minimizes the danger and malignity of sin is cowardly as well as indifferent, dreading a deep probe and a seaching analysis, forgetting that true optimism is not in the diagnosis but in the *remedy*. The diagnosis should be merciless, frigidly scientific; the remedy should be benign as the love of God, mandatory as hope founded on the divine compassion. It is false kindness and gross negligence to say "health, health", when there is no health, but fatal disease. The worst must be known that the best may be applied. So with sin. The greatness of Christ is shown in His friendly wounds, in the end far more grateful than the kisses of an enemy. Nothing that needs to be told is kept back by this frank benefactor of the human race. The probe of righteousness precedes the balm of Gilead. Sinai is the background of Calvary. Abounding in messages of the love of God, divine forgiveness, the glory of spiritual union with the Father, and the hope of immortality, the teaching of Christ holds up the soul of man before the mirror of the perfect law of liberty, that we may behold it in the bondage of sin, and be filled with a passionate desire for that true "liberty wherewith Christ has made us free".

The world does not want its hurt of sin handled lightly. Horace Bushnell used to say that the dignity of man is seen in its ruins. Large phrases about the soul of man must not hide from us the fact which all literature, history, and experience attest, that sin has weakened our spiritual powers and sullied our spiritual fame. Unless there be something to be delivered from, there can be no Christ the Redeemer; if there be no sin, there can be no salvation from sin. It is a great thing to dream dreams; it is a greater thing to see visions. Dreams are of the darkness; visions are, like Shelley's poet, "Hidden in the light of thought". We may dream, if we will, of the final triumph of right, yet, when we awake, the unsubstantial stuff of which our dreams are made is painfully evident; but one keen, quick vision of the malignity of sin, and an equally clear perception of the re-creating mercy of God, is a pledge of present and future victory.



There are two streams in every man's life says Dr. Matheson: The stream of heredity and the stream of grace. Personal sins bring us shame, defeat, the sorrow of remorse; for these *we* are responsible. But besides these we feel in our hearts the downward pull of the race's transgressions and moral failures. Whatever may be our personal views of the original holiness of man, this we must all affirm, with Dr. Matheson, that the stream of *grace* is *older* than the stream of heredity. God's mercy is *from* everlasting *to* everlasting, and "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world". In the message which Christ brought to a poor, broken, outcast woman in Samaria, He gave to all mankind the promise of eternal life; a new *heaven* of ideals of hope, faith and peace; a new *earth* of conduct, of righteousness, love and joy.

## \* THE SOURCE OF JESUS' STRENGTH.

(ST. JOHN 4:34.)

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History tells us of a distinguished general who conducted a great army through a desolate and hostile country with much enthusiasm to a remarkable triumph. The secret of his success lay in his own resolute and genial personality. His soldiers, worn and footsore, were but scantily supplied with food. The heat of the sun was dreadfully oppressive. Day by day the ranks thinned out as climate and privation wrought their natural results. But in spite of all discouragements the gallant hosts pressed on. The explanation was to be found in the conduct of the leader. Foregoing the privileges of rank he dismounted and put himself at the head of the column, sharing with the common soldier the fatigue and hardship of the march. He ate the same food and slept with them shelterless under the open skies. The effect of his presence and example was most exhilarating. The army would have followed him anywhere, even to the gates of death.

On a certain occasion Jesus, addressing His disciples, said: "I have given you an example that ye should do, as I have done to you". In his first epistle to the churches, Peter takes up the same idea and declares that Christ has left us an example that we should follow His steps. In many places in Scripture a similar notion is set forth with great distinctness. There is no more manifest teaching of the New Testament than that the disciple is to endeavor to be like his Master.

One of the most popular religious books of the ages is "The Imitation of Christ", by Thomas à Kempis. Written as it was by a mediæval monk, it is nevertheless loved and prized by all communions of Christians. The very title challenges attention and commends it. The great example is presented as a model whose virtues are to be copied. What Christ did, His followers are to do. Dr. Stalker is the author of another volume with wider scope but built upon the same idea, under the name "Imago Christi". It describes the Master as He appeared in His human relations, in the home, the state, the church, society, and as He conducted Himself as a teacher, a man of feeling, a student, a philanthropist, a winner of souls. Here also Christ is a model. Dr. Sheldon in his well known work "In His Steps", discusses the question "What Would Jesus Do?" and endeavors to point out the path of duty on the basis of an obligation to imitate the great example. All these volumes are exceedingly valuable because they enforce the great truth that in the Master there is an ideal for all disciples.

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The incident brought to our attention by the passage selected by your committee for our consideration at this hour is very suggestive. The scene is laid at a familiar point. Jesus is seated on the curbing of Jacob's well. He had just come on a long and dusty journey from Jerusalem. It was the sixth hour of the day. The disciples had gone to the neighboring Sychar to purchase food. The Master had remained behind to rest. Thus seated and waiting, a woman from the town approached Him. He entered into conversation with her and gradually led the way to the proclamation of important truths. He laid before her a great privilege and aroused keen interest in His offers. She came to see herself in a new light and was surprised and disturbed. While He talked with her the disciples returned with a plentiful supply of edibles. They were amazed to find Him in conversation with a woman. When she left they spread out the food they had procured and invited Him to eat. To their astonishment He replied, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of". This still further amazed them. What could He mean? Had any man brought Him ought? To their puzzled inquiry He answered, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me".

The theme on which I am announced to speak is "The Source of Jesus' Strength". The idea embodied in the Scripture selected finds an appropriate putting in this statement. The committee who formulated it have brought the teaching of the passage before us into clear light. Jesus was possessed of notable strength and in the words just quoted He revealed the secret of it.

It will be readily agreed that the strength referred to in theme and Scripture is not of the muscular sort. The word as here employed does not stand for brawn, or physical virility. There are no reasons for thinking that Jesus was particularly distinguished in these directions. His bodily resources were probably only of the average kind. We know He was not a weakling, for He endured many hardships with patience and sustained vigor. But He was not an athlete. He did not attract attention on account of physical prowess. His distinguishing ability lay in another realm.

Of course strength of any kind is valuable. It is an asset worth possessing. It is stock in trade. It is a bank account. One can always turn it to advantage. But there are varieties of strength. That is to say, one may be strong in several directions. The strength contemplated in the theme and provided for in the text is that which is characteristic of the soul. By it one faces peril, bears burdens and endures hardships with great readiness and without flinching. In this realm Jesus was very strong. Of His soul we may say it was gigantic in its proportions. He was a veritable athlete when it came to facing temptations and attempting tasks requiring courage and resolution.

How did He come to the possession of such ability? By what means did He develop that strength for which He was so distinguished? It is a practical inquiry, for upon it turn some very important lessons.

It should be remembered that strength everywhere depends on nourishment. Full measure of strength calls for adequate nourishment. Without



food all physical powers presently decay. Life indeed is dependent upon it. Physical vigor is everywhere maintained by entirely natural processes. Properly enough, therefore, the scientist gives attention to the kind of food best fitted to produce certain results. It is well known that nitrogenous foods are good for burden bearers, because they minister to muscular power. Carbonates are necessary for those who are exposed to rigorous weather, because they develop heat. Phosphates are useful for brain workers, because they build up nervous energy. When, therefore, one knows what he wants to do, he can easily determine what kind of supplies are necessary for him.

Jesus knew what He wanted, and He also knew how to get it. He saw that the special tasks to which He was called would put particular strain upon the spiritual nature and that, therefore, He must have nourishment for soul. Accordingly, He selected the food which would contribute to the desired result. What was this food? Let us see.

"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me". There are no mysteries in this passage. It is a very simple statement, and its meaning is readily grasped. Obedience is clearly the thing to which reference is made. This is the food—the meat on which He fed. It will be remembered that when He was a boy He said, in explanation of His conduct in the temple, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" The temper and purpose He then displayed were characteristic. On the basis of His established habits He could truly say, "I do always the things that please Him". That was the perpetual attitude He assumed toward the divine will. In the model prayer which He taught His disciples to say occur the words, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done". It was in this spirit that He met all duties and performed all services. He was entirely submissive to the Father's will. And so at Gethsemane, when the clouds shut down about Him and He was face to face with the awful test, He said, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt". It is not surprising, in view of this complete subjection to the wishes of the One who sent Him, that the voice from heaven declared, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased".

Now, what were the psychological processes by which this sort of nourishment was transformed into spiritual vigor. The question is an important one; but it will not be difficult to find a satisfactory answer. The route is short and can be easily followed.

The obedience of Jesus was complete. He was absolutely committed to the service of His Father. The thoroughness of His consecration brought Him into entire harmony with God. There was no sense of estrangement or antagonism. He had no will other than the divine will, or, rather, He willed that His will should be completely surrendered to the divine will.

Of necessity there resulted a feeling of unity. He was sure that He was acting in accord with the divine purposes. He was contributing directly to the accomplishment of the divine program. There was no waste of energy because no false move. He was doing precisely what the overruling Power in the universe desired Him to do.

His faith in the wisdom of this Power lifted Him into an atmosphere of hope. Ultimate success must come. The divine plans, founded in wisdom, must be crowned with triumph. There could not be any permanent failure, for Omnipotence and Omniscience formed a combination which rendered defeat impossible. Naturally enough His soul caught the enthusiasm of a great ideal. A consummation devoutly to be desired was sure to be accomplished. The vision filled and thrilled Him with delight.

The satisfaction imparted by the prospect not only delighted Him, it exhilarated and stimulated Him. There was refreshment and invigoration of spirit in the outlook. The old prophet said: "The joy of the Lord is your strength". This came to be literally true in the experience of Jesus. In His soul there was a sweet and restful confidence which enabled Him to rejoice in the presence of all tasks. The gladness of His heart infused vigor into every fibre of His being. There was genuine tonic in the view presented to His awakened intelligence. However difficult might be the undertaking, and however long delayed the result, He should yet see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

It was some such an experience as this which came to Him as He sat on the famous well and opened to the quickened conscience of the woman from Sychar the great truths of the Gospel. He had made known to her the true character of God as a spirit, to whom spiritual worship alone was acceptable. He had announced in distinct terms the fact of His Messiahship. In fulfillment of His commission to proclaim the abounding grace of heaven He had set before her the opportunity of partaking of that ministry which should be in her a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. He caught the fire of an eager longing for the immediate salvation of an aroused soul and His whole nature was lifted up. The weariness of the flesh was quite forgotten in the stimulation of spirit.

In all this it should be noticed that there was absolutely nothing miraculous; nothing even marvelous; nothing, indeed, really surprising. The process was a wholly natural one. It is entirely within the bounds of reason to say that Christ simply illustrated in this instance, as indeed in many others, the possibilities of all men. He showed what any person might experience who would be willing to meet the conditions. He revealed the secret of spiritual power. What He did, anyone could do. As He developed strength by obedience, so any person who would pay the price might reach a similar result. The invigoration which came to Him was precisely like that which will come to any one who will yield himself completely to the divine control.

Examples of eager enthusiasm, springing out of obedient service, are many and inspiring in the history of the centuries. Sturdy souls have not been wanting who have followed in the footsteps of the Master and have come as He did to great strength.

Foremost among the apostles stands that grand apostle to the Gentiles. He was betrayed by false brethren; he was entrapped by evil men; he was the victim of many ills; he was persecuted often by those of his own nation;

but none of these things moved Him. "Whose I am and whom I serve" was the working motto of His life. He was obedient to the divine will and found stimulation in it.

In great weariness of body the saintly Chrysostom resolutely faced the deprivations and miseries of banishment. He could not be bought by royal favor nor frightened by royal threats. Absolutely loyal to conscience he was strong with the strength which comes from a consciousness of service faithfully performed. To the last his soul was cheerful and contented.

Xavier was moved by a burning passion for the unsaved. Though a Roman Catholic, he earnestly sought the good of souls. He was wholly given to the task of proclaiming the Gospel and leading men to accept it. After having traveled through many kingdoms and baptized thousands of people, as it is reported, He still cried, "Yet more, O my God! yet more!" "The joy of the Lord was his strength". He found in the delight of service invigoration for continued toil.

David Livingstone exhibited a similar indifference to hardship. After long journeyings, Stanley found him in the centre of Africa and presented to him an appeal and an opportunity to return to civilization. But the old hero was unmoved. What cared he for the applause of men? On his soul were the needs of suffering millions. He would stay where he was rather than desert the field of duty. On his last birthday he wrote: "My Jesus, my king, my life, my all, I again dedicate my whole self to Thee". No wonder with such delight in the Lord he found abundant strength for labor.

That old hero John G. Paton, missionary to the New Hebrides, closed a recent volume with these words: "Oh, that I had my life to begin again! I would consecrate it anew to Jesus in seeking the conversion of the remaining cannibals of the New Hebrides". In labors abundant, in perils multitudinous, with courage unflinching, this man of one purpose held steadily to his chosen task through many stormy years. But during it all there was rare cheerfulness, springing out of gladsome obedience to the Father's will.

As in all the past, the Christian life today calls for great vigor. The apostolic exhortation was: "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might". Such an appeal is now in order. Strength is an indispensable requisite for those who would acquit themselves like true soldiers of Jesus Christ.

But how may one become strong? By what means may the necessary vigor be developed? In the experience of Jesus there is a sufficient answer. If men will do as He did, they may develop all the strength they need.

Assent to a creed is not enough. Conformity to the outward requirements of the church will not secure salvation. Something more is demanded. If Christian life is built simply on profession, when the great crises come disaster will be sure to follow. There must be a zeal born of deep conviction and enthusiasm nourished by service, if great victories are to be secured.

Not those who cry "Lord, Lord!" but those who "do His will" are promised divine favor. The voice of revelation distinctly declares: "Blessed are they who do His commandments". Only such have a prospect



of entering through the gates into the city. It was the ringing counsel of the practical James—advice preeminently suited to these modern times—“Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only”.

Are there any enrolled in the army of the Lord today who are unfit for service on the firing line? Indeed, are there not many who are better fitted for the hospital than for any kind of active engagement? There are many weaklings in the church today. They have no strength and can never be relied upon in an emergency. They are a burden on evangelism and a hindrance to the progress of the kingdom.

What the world needs most at this hour is not harnessed Niagaras, steel railways belting the sides of continents, ship canals uniting oceans, but men and women of tense moral fibre, who can stand unmoved in the presence of corruption, face the raging of evil men undisturbed, tower aloft like angels above the pigmies who crouch at their feet, and with invincible will and dauntless daring help to hasten the day when Christ's dominion shall become universal.

Let me venture an exhortation. Let us enthrone the will of God in our hearts. Let us make Jesus the model of our conduct. Let us with enthusiasm imitate the glorious example He set.

Says Stalker in his “*Imago Christi*”: “The imitation of Christ! The very sound of this phrase goes to the heart of every Christian and sets innumerable things moving and yearning in the soul. There is a summons in it like a ravishing voice calling us to sunny heights. It is the sum of all which in our best moments and in our deepest hearts we desire”.

We have not made enough of this. We have been slow to appreciate its value. We have been placing so much emphasis upon the meaning of Christ's sacrifice that we have forgotten the significance of His example.

Of course He died to redeem us. This we must always remember. We will not cease to exalt the cross. In the presence of that unparalleled love, which led to His self-surrender to the cruel agony of Calvary that He might secure deliverance for man from the guilt of sin, we must forever kindle ardent affection.

But while we keep the atonement perpetually in view, as the measure of divine love for us, let us also keep the life of the Master before us as the ideal of conduct. Let us remember that He lived to show men how to live. Let us take Him as our example, and let us ceaselessly endeavor to imitate His virtues.

\* THE GOSPEL OF JOHN IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE  
OF THE CHURCHES.

BY REV. HENRY M. KING, D. D.,

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This important topic will be best presented, if we consider the avowed purpose of the Gospel; the fitness of the author to carry it out; the manner in which he has done it; and the success which he has achieved. As some of the topics discussed in these Conferences are special and have to do with particular passages, while others are general and have to do with the scope and purpose of the entire Gospel, it is inevitable that there will be instances of repetition and it is quite possible that there may be honest differences of opinion in interpretation.

Professor Cremer, in his able "Reply to Harnack on the Essence of Christianity", defines his view of the purpose of the Fourth Gospel in the following words: "The Johannean Gospel is intended for the congregation of believers who already know and follow Christ, and is meant to strengthen, confirm and enrich them, and to develop their faith more fully. The synoptic Gospels, on the other hand, give us that record of Jesus' career and history as it was again and again reported in connection with the missionary preaching, and as it very soon took, as to the main parts, a relatively fixed form. Matthew gives the apology of Jesus' Messiahship over against Judaism; Luke a record of the history of Jesus, and the preaching of the Gospel set down for the enlightenment of a prominent heathen interested in Christianity; while Mark has put together what he heard again and again in the missionary preaching. We may thus understand how it is that we meet a difference between the Johannean account and that of the synoptists, which is similar to the difference that appears between the apostolic account and that of Christ Himself".

In other words, John's Gospel contains the unfolding by Christ of Himself, His person and mission, to those who had become His disciples, and were to some extent prepared to welcome and apprehend, and be enriched by the deeper spiritual truths of His kingdom.

The purpose of this latest, maturest, richest of the four Gospels has been variously conceived by different writers. There is a tradition that John was requested by his fellow Christians to prepare a Gospel with a view to counteract the influence of certain heretical views of the nature of Christ which were prevalent near the close of the first century; and that before consenting he asked them to spend with him three days in fasting and prayer that he might ascertain the Lord's will in a matter so serious and

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\* Delivered at the Second Conference, held at the Mathewson Street Methodist Episcopal Church, November 11, 1903.

sacred. Jerome seems to have accepted the tradition as founded on fact, for he says that "John last of all wrote a Gospel when asked to do so by the bishops of Asia, against Cerinthus and other heretics, and especially against the rising dogma of the Ebionites, who asserted that Christ did not exist before Mary".

It looks sometimes as if the writer of this Gospel was seeking to meet objections, and to convince heretics, and was well acquainted with the philosophic thought of that philosophical age. He could not have been ignorant of Philo and his teachings of the Logos—that Jewish philosopher of Alexandria who died within ten years after the crucifixion of Christ, and who endeavored to harmonize the Mosaic religion with Platonism. It was the "higher criticism" of that day, an attempt to reduce revelation to a philosophic basis by the hypothesis of a Logos, personal or impersonal, Philo seemed to be uncertain which, the embodiment of all divine power and wisdom—a doctrine which was the fruitful germ of all the gnostic speculations and heresies of the second and third centuries. But John, guided by the divine Spirit (for no humble fisherman unaided could have attained unto it), declared Christ to be the true, living, personal Logos, possessor of creative power and infinite wisdom, God and Saviour in one person, God manifest in the flesh. The word "Logos" in its religio-philosophic use was like "the altar to the unknown God" at Athens. John seized the word and the opportunity it afforded, and in applying it to Christ gave to it a larger and truer interpretation, a diviner fulness and richness of meaning, virtually saying, "Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you". In thought, he went back to the story of creation, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth", and in similar language opened his story of redemption, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". He gathered up all that was true in revelation and all that was highest and best in philosophy, and centered it in Christ, the Son of God, the Divine Logos. (An extract from "Our Gospels", pp. 80, 81, by Henry M. King.)

Other writers hold the view that John's Gospel was intended to be supplementary to the other Gospels, to supply the deficiencies of the first three, especially in reference to the ministry of Christ in Judea, and the remarkable events which took place during its one year, possibly two years' duration, and the memorable discourses which do not appear in the synoptical Gospels, but form so large and unspeakably valuable a part of John's message, especially the farewell discourses in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth chapters. It is impossible to believe with Alford, that none of the other Gospels had ever been seen by John. They had been written for thirty or forty years prior to John's Gospel, and undoubtedly had been numerous transcribed, and widely circulated, and highly prized by the Christian communities. Ephesus was a great center of Christian life and activity, and it is incredible that the sacred writings of the deceased evangelists, on which the churches had come to rely for their knowledge of Christ and the events of His life, should not have found their way to this



populous city of Asia Minor, where Christianity had been planted at an early date, and which had been "a conspicuous scene of apostolic labors". The character of John's Gospel gives abundant evidence that he was familiar with the contents of these earlier writings. The things which he omits, which he must have known and remembered by reason of his constant fellowship and close intimacy with Christ, and the things which he narrates, are equally conclusive on this point. He carefully avoids traversing the ground which the other Gospels had gone over. He omits all of Christ's parables, and gives only one miracle in common with the other biographers, while he records four new ones, viz.: the turning of water into wine, the raising of Lazarus from the dead, and the healing of the impotent man and of the one born blind. The synoptists limit their story almost entirely to the Galilean ministry, while John's Gospel is largely devoted to the life and teachings of Christ in Judea.

This view was held by Eusebius. He said, "For these reasons the Apostle John, it is said, being entreated to undertake it, wrote the account of the time not recorded by the former evangelists \* \* \* giving the deeds of Jesus before the Baptist was cast into prison. \* \* \* It is probable, therefore, that John passed by in silence the genealogy of our Lord because it was written by Matthew and Luke, but commenced with the doctrine of the divinity as a part reserved for him by the divine Spirit, as if for a superior".

If John had intended to supply the deficiencies of his predecessors in biographical detail, he could not have been more successful.

But the purpose and supplementary character of John's Gospel have a deeper meaning still. It was not written simply to correct errors which were becoming prevalent, honorable as such a motive would have been. Nor was it written and sent abroad primarily to furnish additional biographical material, which had been omitted by the synoptists. As another has said, "It was not a mere patchwork to fill up vacant spaces". Its supplementary character is seen especially in the kind of material which its rich chapters have preserved for Christ's followers of all the ages. Its definite purpose, its supreme purpose, is generally believed to have been declared by the author himself, near the end of the Gospel, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name" (20: 30, 31).

The confirmation of faith in the Messiah as the Son of God, the deepening, the developing, the enriching of the life of the disciples of Christ, and so of the churches of Christ, may be said to have been the aim consciously and constantly present in the mind of John in the selection of his material. It was preeminently a spiritual Gospel. It is no disparagement of the other Gospels to say that they have to do largely, I say largely, with the outward manifestation of Jesus, His genealogy, His birth, His boyhood, His outward associations, the events of His life, His displays of miraculous power, that

which was visible and made its appeal to the senses, all of which was necessary to give to the world a real, living, historic portrait of our Lord. But something more was required for the deeper interpretation of His nature and spirit and mission. Clement of Alexandria said: "John, last, perceiving that the bodily things had been made manifest in the Gospels, being also encouraged by his intimate friends, and moved by the Spirit of God, made a *spiritual Gospel*".

That John was especially fitted for this service no one can doubt. His natural characteristics, his special intimacy with his Master, that about him that caused Christ to draw him into the inner circle of His friendships, to His very bosom at the farewell supper, and that made him forever known as "the disciple whom Jesus loved", and also his now mature and ripe experience and long instruction through many years by the Spirit, who was promised to lead receptive minds into all the truth, and his ever deepening insight into the profoundest truths of revelation, all these things qualified John in a preeminent degree for the preparation of that treatise which should round out to a divine completeness the canon of inspiration, and made him "the greatest, as he was the last of the spiritual teachers of the Church". Had the Gospel of John been written forty years earlier, its form undoubtedly would have been different. It was the production of the Spirit of God working through a mind which had had a rich, full experience of divine truth, and an ever growing and strengthening apprehension of the person of Christ as well as of that life of God, that true and eternal life, which faith in Christ generates in the heart of the believer.

Alford has drawn the following striking contrast between the work of the two great apostles, Paul and John, while unfolding the true aim of the latter: "The great apostle of the Gentiles, amidst fightings without and fears within, built in his argumentative Epistles the outworks of that temple of which his still greater colleague and successor was chosen noiselessly to complete, in his peaceful old age, the inner and holier places; and this after all, ranging under it all secondary aims, we must call the great object of the evangelist—to advance, purify from error and strengthen that matured Christian life of knowledge, which is the true development of the teaching of the Spirit in men, and which the latter part of the apostolic period witnessed in its full vitality".

The supplementary character, the superior value, the crowning place and service of the Gospel of John have been recognized by the friends and foes of Christianity alike. This Gospel has called forth the fiercest assaults of unbelievers who have looked upon it as the very citadel of the Christian faith, whose capture would mean the overthrow of supernatural religion. On the other hand it has made its appeal successfully to the intelligent faith of multitudes of devout scholars, and has found its confirmation in the deepening spiritual life of the Church to which it has ministered as from a fresh and inexhaustible reservoir. Augustine says: "In the four Gospels, or rather in the four books of the one Gospel, the apostle St. John, not undeservedly with reference to his spiritual understanding compared to an

eagle, has lifted higher and far more sublimely than the other three his proclamation, and in lifting it up he has wished our hearts also to be lifted". An old Latin hymn, referring to the eagle-character of John reads:

"Bird of God! with boundless flight  
Soaring far beyond the height  
Of the bard or prophet old;  
Truth fulfilled and truth to be—  
Never purer mystery  
Did a purer tongue unfold".

Origen says: "We may presume then to say that the Gospels are the first fruits of all the Scriptures, and the first fruits of the Gospels is that of John, into whose meaning no man can enter unless he has reclined upon the bosom of Jesus". The following is the confession of Claudius: "When I read John, it always seems to me that I see him before me, reclining at the last supper on the bosom of his Lord, as if his angel held the light for me, and at certain parts would place his arm around me, and whisper something in my ear". Luther speaks of John as "the one true, tender, main Gospel".

Ernesti calls this Gospel "the heart of Christ". Biederman characterizes it as "the most wonderful of all religious works". De Wette says of its expressions: "They glow with a lustre more than earthly". Herder exclaims in irrepressible admiration: "It was written by the hand of an angel". Kaufman denominates John "the Plato of the inspired circle". Lange affirms that "since Irenaeus it has remained for the sons of the apostolic spirit, the crown of the apostolic Gospels". Tholuck declares: "This Gospel speaks a language to which no parallel whatever is to be found in the whole compass of literature; such childlike simplicity, with such contemplative profundity; such life and such deep rest; such sadness and such severity; and above all, such a breath of love". Farrar says: "The first three evangelists give us diverse aspects of one glorious landscape. St. John pours over that landscape a flood of heavenly sunshine, which seems to transfigure its very character, though every feature of the landscape remains the same". Again Herder says: "That little book is a still deeper sea, in which the sun and stars are mirrored; and if there are eternal truths (and such there are) for the human race, they are to be found in the Gospel of John". Hovey says: "For, verily, beneath the tranquil surface of this Gospel, which is filled to so great an extent with what the Lord Himself said, are deep and fervid ocean-currents of holy life and love, which no one can undertake to explore and describe without being made to feel the dimness of his vision and the feebleness of his speech". And Godet says: "It was he who bequeathed to the world in his three works the three-fold picture of the life in God; in the person of Christ (the Gospel); in the Christian (the Epistles); and in the Church (the Apocalypse). He anticipated more perfectly than any other the festival of the eternal life".

This wonderful, profound, mature, superior, superhuman, angelic Gospel may be said to be, then, preeminently the Gospel of life, of life through belief in Christ as the Son of God, not life apart from Christ, but life through



faith in Christ, in His revealed nature and mission and power, life through the receiving of Christ into the soul, through personal union with Christ, life which has its origin in Christ and its sustenance and development in Christ, which is truly the life of Christ, which is the life of God who only hath eternal life, life for the individual, life for the church, and life for the world.

This Gospel sets forth the divine person of Christ and the sacrificial work of Christ more clearly and fully than is done anywhere else. It begins with His preexistence and eternal oneness with God, and ascribes to Him the creation of all things. It goes on to speak of Him as the Incarnate Word, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, the ladder of communication between heaven and earth, and the teacher of the new spiritual birth, of which baptism is the beautifully appropriate symbol (an interpretation required by the oriental form of expression, clearly taught by the prayer book of the Church of England, where it defines baptism as "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us", and necessitated by the spiritual nature of the Christian religion, which is not a mechanism to be manipulated by human hands, but a life imparted directly by the Spirit of God, whose disciples are new-born "not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God").

And, further, this Gospel represents Christ as the water of life, the promised Messiah, the quickener of the soul, the just and final judge, the light of the world, the true manna from heaven, the author of true spiritual freedom, the good shepherd who giveth his life for the sheep, the resurrection and the life, the architect and builder of the heavenly mansions, the adequate manifestation of the Father, the living vine, the sender of the Holy Spirit, the rightful possessor of divine glory and sharer of it with His disciples, the confessed King in the realm of truth, and, at the same time, the willing victim upon the cross of error and shame; and then it concludes, as it began, with the confession of Thomas, "My Lord and my God"; and upon these great truths, and upon faith in these truths, it posits the acquisition and the continuance of spiritual life in the soul of man. It unfolds with remarkable clearness and fullness the deeper spiritual verities of the person and the mission of the Son of God, and then says—believe these verities, accept Him in whom they all centre, and you shall have life. "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name".

The word "life" is found more than forty times in John's Gospel, and in most significant connections. "In Him was life and the life was the light of men". "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life". "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life". "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life". "I am that bread of life". "Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood", that is, except ye believe in a Saviour crucified for you, "ye have no life in you". "I am come that they might

have life, and that they might have it abundantly", not "more abundantly" as the received version has it, for this spiritual life, which Christ came to bring, has no existence in the unregenerate heart.

"My sheep hear My voice and they follow Me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand". "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live". "I am the way and the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me". "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine (and draw every moment its life from the vine) no more can ye, except ye abide in Me". "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent". "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name".

These, and many other passages show us the tremendous emphasis which John's Gospel lays upon spiritual life, its source and its sustenance, its origin and its development, as born of faith, and kept alive by faith, in the preexistent, divine, only-begotten, crucified, risen Son of God. It is this that distinguishes this Gospel from the others; that gives to it its exalted character, its transcendent richness and its marvellous power. Its lofty spiritual truths kindle in the soul aspirations after greater nearness to God. Its profound spiritual philosophy deepens and purifies the currents of life. Its sublime revelations of the Saviour, which must ever in this finite sphere be clothed with mystery, lift us up out of the realm of sense and of material things into a new atmosphere and introduce us to a new order of being. "The Word was with God and was God". "The Word was made flesh". "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth". In the light of these passages we get new conceptions of sonship with God, its privilege and its meaning, its dignity and its obligation, and we say with the apostle Paul, "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord we are transfigured into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord".

Is there any aspect of essential, saving truth that is not clearly presented in John's Gospel, and in some instances more clearly than in any other inspired book? Is there any proper motive to Christian faith and obedience that it does not appeal to with the utmost tenderness and fidelity? Is there any chord of the renewed heart that it does not touch with the hand of a Master?

How beautifully it sets forth the simplicity of saving faith! As the bitten Israelite looked to the brazen serpent, so may the sin-conscious soul look to Christ and be healed. How impressively, and for all places and times, does it declare the spiritual nature of worship! "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth". How strikingly does it emphasize the necessity of a living and perpetual union with Christ in order to the possession and retention of spiritual life, and the production of spiritual fruit! "I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that

abideth in Me and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without Me ye can do nothing". How persuasively does it inculcate the spirit of absolute and perpetual obedience to Christ! "My sheep hear My voice and they follow Me". "If ye love Me, keep My commandments". How tenderly does it plead for the intimate fellowship and unbroken oneness of all the followers of Christ! "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me". How strongly and positively it asserts the reality and blessedness of the future life, and the eternal safety of all who put their trust in Jesus Christ! "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you (if there were no future life, no conscious dwelling with God in peace and felicity after this life is over, I would not have left you in ignorance), I go to prepare a place for you", words which we repeat for their comfort by the bedside of the dying, and for our comfort by the open graves of our precious dead.

But why need I further enumerate? To speak of all the passages in this wonderful Gospel that minister to the strengthening of the Christian faith and the deepening of the life of God in the soul, would be to bring the whole book before you, chapter by chapter, and verse by verse.

Let the ministry of today breathe constantly the atmosphere of this Gospel, be found often in this holy of holies of revealed truth, sit long at the feet of him who sat long at the feet of the Master, and absorbed so much of His spirit and message, and then blank Agnosticism and lifeless Arianism, blind Naturalism and icy Formalism will be unknown in our pulpits. Let the churches give themselves to the diligent and prayerful study of this Fourth Gospel, and then the fatal materialism of this materialistic age, and the worldiness which has crept in with stealthy footsteps and with deadening power, and the unspirituality and apathy which cripple the benevolence, curtail the efforts and limit the influence of our churches, will be driven out at once and forever. The Gospel of John is the divine corrective of all the ills that afflict our modern Christianity.

Dr. Henry Van Dyke says: "With the materialism, the sensuality, the pride of our age, Christianity stands in conflict. With the altruism, the humanity, the sympathy of our age, Christianity must stand in loving and wise alliance. A simpler creed and a nobler life will prepare the way for a renaissance of religion greater and more potent than the world has known for centuries. It seems as if we stood on the brightening border of the new day. The watchword of its coming is the personal Gospel of Jesus Christ, in whom we find the ideal man and the real God".



## \*SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—I do not propose to discuss anything thoroughly, but to gather up some of the peculiarities and characteristics of this Gospel as compared with the others. The question of authorship I do not consider. I am myself persuaded that it was written by the man whose name it bears. There is the historical evidence which is so old that you can get very near to the time when it was written. Then, too, there is one thing I should think every one would feel, that it was written by an honest man. It was not invented; it was something that had been. A man could not think it out any more than he could think out a sunrise and describe it, if he had never seen one; or a friendship, if he had never known one. Again, it needed a man of very rare qualities. For instance, we are all familiar with the fact that St. John never mentions himself by name, and he never mentions the name of the mother of Jesus. He loved to call himself the "disciple whom Jesus loved". That is the man we think of when we speak of the authorship of this Gospel. He dealt with the tenderest things of life, the most sacred things; he dealt with the principles and facts of life, but if he had been nothing but a loved and loving man, his Gospels and Epistles would hardly have been like these we have. He was a man to be loved, it is true, but he was more than that, he was also a son of thunder. It needed just that combination to make a man go safely among the truths which he traversed and present the most tender things, and yet in such a way as to commend themselves to thoughtful, exacting men. While we speak of this Gospel as the Gospel of the heart, it is also the Gospel of the head and hand; it stands on the ground, while at the same time it ascends into heaven. St. John is commonly spoken of as an eagle which is able to soar to the greatest heights. But he had his nest in a tree that was very firmly rooted in this world, and if you think of him only in the attitude of a lover you mistake the man. Then, too, he had special advantages in being very near to our Lord. The nearer he came to Christ the more reason he had to love and admire Him. Most great characters are great because of their distance. When we come up to them they lose some of their superb proportions. There is that old saying, which I do not like to use, that "A man is never a hero to his valet". I am inclined to believe that no man is great who is not great to his valet. You have to be great to the man who stands close to you and knows the secrets of your

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life before you can be considered truly great. And John, in standing thus close to Christ, marks the greatness which increased as he came to know Him more intimately.

Again, as my old friend, Dr. Peabody, was in the habit of saying, one thing that bears witness that John wrote the Gospel is that it was written by an old man. A peculiarity of the old man is that he notices small things. In this Gospel you will find more of what we are in the habit of calling the trivial things of life. I suppose if he was writing the account of the feast at Cana, a young man would have said, "And there were set some water jars there which were large". John says there were six water pots of stone, and that they held two or three firkins apiece. In the same way, a young man would have treated the last miracle of our Lord at the Sea of Galilee; he would have said that they (the fishermen) were quite a little distance off the land; an old man would say "they were about 200 furlongs, I noticed". "There were a multitude of fish"; "there were 153 fishes, and they were big ones", the old man would say. "Great" is a relative term; he did not mean that they were large absolutely, but compared with the fish usually taken in the Sea of Galilee. And when this writer says there were 153, and that they were unusually large ones, you see the fisherman is betrayed, and John was a fisherman. Such little traits as these go with the historical evidence. The Gospel was evidently written by a man with the characteristics of this disciple.

I do not remember having seen it anywhere, although some of you may have seen it elsewhere, yet it is borne in upon me that there is one person who had a great deal to do with the writing of this Gospel whose name is not mentioned in it, and that is the Virgin Mary, the mother of our Lord. Now when Christ was upon the cross, apparently, as far as we can read the story, Mary was not near, and this disciple went and brought her, and from the cross Jesus commended His mother to this disciple, and this disciple to the mother, and then comes that very interesting line: "and from that hour that disciple took her to his own home." What do you suppose they did then? What did they talk about? They talked about the one person in all the world who was dearest to their hearts. They talked about what had just taken place, and the mother heart which had enabled her to understand and enter into the spirit of her Son was opened before the young man with whom she was living. In the morning and at night they talked about Him. Now if you wished to write the biography of any great man you would go where he lived; you would go into the house, look at the grounds, talk with the neighbors, try to get into what we call by the indefinite term the atmosphere of the man and the place. For you can not write a man's biography unless you know the man himself, and the conditions of his life and thought. That is the reason most biographies are of so little use; they can tell when a man was born and when he died, but they do not give you that indefinable trait which you get when you come close to the man. And this belongs to our Lord more than any one else. It is not alone what He did or said, but in what way He said it and for what reason.

We sometimes represent Him with a halo over His head, but that is a poor thing, though it illustrates what I mean. And no one knew Him like His mother. When you get a heart that was as responsive as John's was, and when they could talk together for weeks, or perhaps years, her thoughts would become his. It seems to me that all through, from the beginning to the end, there can be traced the word, spirit, and influence of that mother through whose soul there passes a sword when He was crucified. I was not to speak about the authorship of the Gospel, and yet these things carry us into the very spirit of it.

St. John's Gospel is not a book of mathematics or philosophy. It is the story of a great human life expressed in insufficient terms, and you never can read it unless you have something a thousand times better than a dictionary; you must have a heart. It is itself a heart, and it must be read by the heart and translated by the heart. I believe that those who have read it with the heart and translated it into heart have never doubted it or its authorship. A man who has had the spirit to go through it and enter into it finds a witness in himself and believes because he must believe. I call it the Gospel of the heart, and so it is, but it is even then of a very substantial character. The apostles had to put together two things that had never been put together before. They had no precedent. They had to show a person who carried himself in this world as a common man, in whom was the living and eternal God. As far as literature is concerned, there has never been a problem that approached this which was set before these men, one of whom was a fisherman, another a tax collector, another a doctor, and the business of the other we do not know. They had to make books so substantial that they could found churches upon them, and men could fashion their lives by them. And how finely they have done it. Some years ago, when I was younger and knew more than I do now, I became a lecturer in a theological seminary. I knew that if I was going to accomplish anything I had to be original. So I tried to be original in this lectureship. I proposed to tell the young men that I wanted each one to take a blank sheet of paper and rule it into three columns, and in the first column they should put down every passage in the New Testament where Christ was represented simply as a man; in the second column they should put down every passage representing Christ as God, and in the third the passages representing the union of the two. Well, so far as presenting Him as the God-man, I easily filled that column, and so far as presenting Him as God alone, I filled that column with ease, but I never have been able to find the first entry to put in the first column. I could not find a passage in the four Gospels which represents Jesus Christ as simply a man. If any of you know such a passage, I wish you would tell me that I may get something in that column. Perhaps you say, "Why, He was tired one day and while on His way through Samaria sat down on a well". Is that the whole of the narrative? You must read it all, you know. You might as well take one of the pipes out of this organ, and get a boy to blow it, and say that is the organ, as to take a single sentence out of a narrative and say that that is



the whole. When you write a letter, you insist that the man shall read it all the way through. Now you will find that every heresy that is in the church, or that is coming into the church, rests upon the principle of taking a single instrument out of a band and then insisting that that is the band. Why stop at the place where it says that Christ was tired? Go on. Presently He speaks to the woman who had come there to draw water, and He speaks such words as from the creation of the world had never been spoken, and have never been spoken since by any one: "The water that I shall give you shall be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life". That is God. It is not a tired man sitting by Jacob's well.

Well, He was in the fisherman's boat, and "being weary He put His head on the cushion and went to sleep". Why do you stop there? When the waves began to roll and the storm to increase and the boat to begin to sink they called Him; He stood up, He spoke to the tempest and the tempest became a calm. He breathed upon the waters and the waters were as quiet as the floor. No mere man there. If the man was asleep on the cushion, He was more when He stilled the storm.

Let me give you another instance where the man very easily appears. He is on the cross; three are hanging side by side. They are dying; surely there is the man. Read the letter through, please. This man draws to Himself the attention of a fellow dying at His side. This man looks to Him. His gaze is the gaze of a dying man. With some poor blind faith he prays, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom". There never has been a man since the beginning of the world who would have said what Jesus said under these circumstances. The best man you know would have said, "My friend, let us both pray to the Father". What did this man say? "My poor, dying friend, I shall be in paradise before night, and I will take you there with me." That is not a man, is it? I have nothing for my first column. Do you think of any thing? And how does it happen? In vain do you try to separate what God has joined together. In the words that were read to us, "The word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth". That is Divine life.

Now we must expect some peculiarities in this Gospel. If you write a book, you do not copy what some one else has written and try to publish it as your own; but you try to state something that is your own, something that you have found out yourself. Now there were three Gospels written before John began, and to copy them would be a waste of parchment. Luke's Gospel was written by a scientific man, a physician. The other two Gospels were written by different men with a different purpose. John's was written a long time afterwards. He certainly might mention some things in a different way, but he would have to go over the same ground, just as they do in school. If you go into your lowest classes here today you find that they are teaching the alphabet and the multiplication table. So, if you turn to your grammar school, your high school, and university, you will find the same things being taught, the alphabet and the multiplica-

tion table, but you will also find the higher grade of scholars and, perhaps, older men teaching. So, here, while John uses the same alphabet and multiplication table, he teaches it in higher branches, for he is speaking in advance of that which has been written. You will find that John takes the initial and essential points of the Gospel and carries them further. John says nothing about the nativity. Why should he? That has been described. But he presents the incarnation. The nativity is the primary school; the incarnation is for the university. The Gloria in Excelsis is the beginning of the incarnation. Why should he write the nativity? You have it from the hand of a scientific man that has done it as well as John could do it. You have the changing of a man's life in the earlier Gospels; you come to John and you have Nicodemus told to be born again. You have redemption and forgiveness in the other Gospels, but John gives you "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." That is Brown University; that is the highest reach of the thought and the method of it. You find the method of redemption described in the three Gospels, but you find John illustrating this. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up". "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." That is the extension of the truth, which in its simple principles appears in the other Gospels. But it is no more different than Brown University is different from the kindergarten. I think that is as far as I should go upon this part of my theme.

I ask you to notice some peculiarities in this Gospel, some special things that are not mentioned in the others. I venture the statement that these peculiarities are simply a development and not inconsistencies. I have stated that you have in the first three Gospels the primary school, and in the fourth Gospel Brown University. And they are the same, only one is a little higher, a little older, and may express the idea more accurately. The readers are more advanced and have more advanced truths.

Now it is a very singular thing that John opens his Gospel with the same words which were used at the beginning of the Bible. It seems to me remarkable that the first three things that are asserted in the beginning of the Bible are the same three things that are asserted in the very beginning of John's Gospel. Now how do you account for that? No other writer ever did that. "In the beginning", was John's opening. "In the beginning God". John says, "In the beginning was the Word", and "the Word was with God, and the Word WAS God." Genesis further says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth". John says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. *All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.*" Thus the first three declarations of Genesis are the first three declarations of St. John. And further, they are written for the same reason. John is giving the university account of what is given in Genesis. He is showing what the world was made for and Who made it. He is entering into the mystery

of the Divine being, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; it is God, but it is also the Son. The New Testament teaches that it is the Son who is the creator, and St. John grasped that truth, which the apostles repeated after him. So that when you come later on into the Book of Revelation, you find a new heaven and a new earth, and a new Jerusalem, and a new life, and a new light. John is writing the story of creation. I think that is a remarkable fact. The narrative in Genesis is the most remarkable thing in literature. The writer was describing things which took place long before he was born. He did it with wonderful accuracy. Some years ago I had occasion to speak of this, and chancing to meet a distinguished geologist spoke of it to him. He finally said, half impatiently, "I believe that the first living thing that was created was a fish." Well, I did not feel that I knew much on the subject, so I kept silent. I had been quoting the Bible, and here was the answer of science. When I reached my home I went to my Bible and looked the matter up. I found that my friend was right, for, back in the Book of Genesis, this particular honor was given to the fish, and this was also the last word of science. Now, if you can tell me how the unknown writer of Genesis knew that the first living thing created was a fish, you will solve the greatest problem in the literature of the world.

Now if you will take your Gospel of John and compare it with the Synoptics you will find some surprising things. You will find some notable omissions. John has nothing of the Sermon on the Mount, or the Lord's Prayer. He has nothing of the Baptism or Temptation of Jesus. He has scarcely anything of John the Baptist's ministry. He omits some of the best parables that Jesus spoke. He omits the parable of the virgins and the account of that great day of judgment recorded in Matthew. All very substantial things, as you can see. John also omits to say that Jesus took little children in His arms and blessed them. The parable of the Good Samaritan, which we love so much, he leaves out. Perhaps the fact that they had been told was a good reason, but he did repeat some things that the others said. He made a choice of those things which best suited his purpose, as he registered the account of the new creation by Jesus Christ Himself; the creation of a new man for a new world.

I want for a little while to notice some things in John's Gospel that we do not find anywhere else. The first thing, which has already been mentioned in your discussion today, is the account of the miracle at Cana of Galilee. We might say that is a thing John should leave out. It was not of any consequence, the whole thing was ethically a mistake. Why did he put it in? It means that Christ came down into the home life. And, after all, the comfort that we have in our own homes goes far to make up the real value of life and the pleasure of living. Think for a moment of the circumstances. Here is this wedding, and the bride was probably a kinswoman of our Lord. He had been invited, and had taken several men with Him, and as usually happens under these circumstances, the wine gave out. We might at first think that was not a great matter, but it was. It was the one day of that young girl's life. It would never have done to have the



wine fail; it would have been a life-long disgrace. She would never have gotten over it. Perhaps Jesus felt in a measure responsible for it. He certainly pitied her, and came to her rescue as only He could do, and to save her cheeks from reddening with shame, he reddened the water into wine.

What is the next incident? That is much more important—an interview with a wise coward, but still a coward, who came by night, when no one could see him, to converse with the Lord. He thought well of himself, but the first thing that Christ taught him was that he was wrong. Nicodemus said: "I would like to talk with you about the Kingdom of Heaven". Jesus said substantially, "It is not any use, you are not going there. The Kingdom of Heaven is that way, and you are going this way. If you really want to go there, you will have to take this road and turn your back upon that". Well, that was a pretty serious thing to say to any man. I think I have paraphrased it a little. What did Jesus say? "My dear sir, if you are going to be a child of God, you will have to go back and be born over again". There are only two ways of becoming a man's child or God's child; you must either be born into the family or adopted into it. And all Christ's processes are processes of nature, so the adoption method would not do. There is not a single eccentric thing in all the things that Christ ever did or taught. There was never a queer thing in any of his words or actions. If you are to be really a person's son, you must be born so. I believe this is thought to be one of the severest passages in the Gospels. There are men of more than average intelligence who reject it, and many also fear it. It is one of the most joyful and hopeful things that has ever been taught. There is not one of you here who has not said at one time or another, "Oh, if I could only live my life over again". This passage says that you can. In your school days you worked over your problem and found the answer was not right. But when you found that it was wrong you changed a figure here, another one there, and when finally you could not make it come right you took your sponge and wiped it all out and said, "I am going to begin over again". Now that is what Christ said to Nicodemus: "Begin over again as a child. Don't do it as an old man, begin to grow up into the childhood toward God, and then when it comes time to go to heaven you will simply go home". I asked my little girl one day when she came home at noon, "Why did you come in here?" She opened her great eyes and looked at me; she did not know what I meant. I said, "Why didn't you go into the Doctor's, next door?" Finally she said, "Why, this is my home". Yes, it is home, that is the reason you are going to heaven, you are going to your Father's home. It must be a home. You have to be a child of God if you wish to enter the Father's home. There is not a man living who does not need this new birth. There are a great many men living today who need to have their lives turned back to the very source and to be born again into a real childhood, and fitted for the home that is in heaven. So I say it is one of the gladdest and most joyous things in the whole Gospel. To think

of it, my friends, that a man can be born again. Think of it, that your life with all its blunders can be wiped out; that your sins can all be cast into the sea; that you can start all over again and prattle as God's child, and work as God's child, and finally go home, because heaven is your Father's house. Surely the story of the new birth is good news to the men and women of this day.

The next incident that comes to my mind is the Lord's interview at the well of Jacob at Samaria, which was of a similar character. The Saviour said to this woman, "You keep coming here day after day, and you are just as thirsty; I want to tell you something". Then He said the strangest word she ever heard; the most marvelous thing that ever fell upon the poor, dull ear of that woman, a name she never had heard; that the eternal God whom her fathers worshipped was her Father. She crouched at His feet. Other men were ready to stone her, they frowned at her, there was but one friendly face, and only one who knew her, and down into her wrecked heart He let fall that benediction, "God is your Father, and He loves you". "I can give unto you that water that shall become in you a well of water which shall be pure water, which shall be sweet, refreshing water, and you shall live a life indeed". She went out and told it, and you know how much better she was than the disciples. The disciples went into the town to get things, she went into the town to give something; and "it is more blessed to give than to receive". She even left her water-pot. I wonder what became of it. She went everywhere, telling it to everybody, and the people asked Him to stay. The people were not courteous; they said, "We have heard Him ourselves, we know this is the Christ", and then followed their confession. It was a strange thing to say. There was hardly a Jew who believed He was the Christ; there are many people who do not now believe it; "This is the Christ, the Saviour of the world". How many wise men say today that Christ is the Saviour for the people in Providence and the rest of Rhode Island; that Buddha will do for the people of India; that Mohammed will do for the Turks and Arabians; that Confucius will do for the Chinese, and Christ will take care of the Anglo-Saxon. But they said this Gospel should be for the world. Nine years after that, when Philip went there, he found people waiting for him, all ready, and it is recorded that there "was great joy in that city". Those men had held on, they had stood faithful to Christ for nine years. Is not that worth telling? Was not that worth doing? No wonder that John puts this story in. These incidents have been with individuals. He had not very much to do with multitudes, though He talked with them when they came to Him. But Christ had wonderful power with individuals. There was Nicodemus. Christ did not seem to get a strong hold upon him, but the man came and anointed Him when He was dead. There was the rich young man who went away, but went sorrowful, because he had to choose between Christ and his real estate. And there was poor Judas. When the treason was all over he brought the money back and threw it down and went out and hanged himself. Christ had some hold upon him, but it was not enough to save him. It is that

personal contact, the grip of spirit with spirit, that is so conspicuous in Christ's life, and that is what John preeminently teaches.

Then, at the pool of Bethesda at Jerusalem, we have the healing of the poor man who had been a cripple longer than Christ had been in the world. He had not energy enough to roll into the pool, and nobody had goodness enough to put him in. When Christ asked him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" he began to whine. "I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool, but while I am coming another steppeth down before me". "Why, there are forty priests in the temple; here are a score of men going by now; here is a man just going up out of the water". "Yes, I know it", he seemed to reply, "but they go away and forget us who are afflicted here". And if this man was worth healing, as I think he was, after that there was always some one there to help any other who was helpless. From that day he always went round that way when he returned home or went to work in the morning, if he was a workman. Some one might stop him and ask, "Why do you always go by that road to and from your work, you know the other way is much nearer?" "Oh, I tell you, I know what it is, I know how it feels to be down there. See that poor fellow there; I was there a long time, until the day when the good Master healed me, and it shall never be said, as long as I live, that there is no one there to put a poor cripple into the pool when the water is disturbed". Suppose there was a man here in Providence and nobody had invited him to come to the Lord Jesus for two weeks, what do you suppose that man would think of the Christian people of the town? Suppose you are a professing Christian and as Christ's disciple you come to the Lord's table, if you had not for some three or four days tried to help your fellow men into a knowledge of your Master, what would He think of your religion? Say to yourself, "I never, never will have it true that there was any man anxious to go into the pool to be healed who failed because I was concerned only to get into heaven myself. I will not let my afflicted neighbors lie unaided in their affliction". Every day I will go down upon these marble steps, and these arms shall move any man who is there and needs it. Perhaps that is what John meant by telling this story, which the other apostles omitted. Good Doctor Sears used to say that no man ever tried to go to heaven alone who did not freeze by the way. You come to the God of heaven with a poor sinner in your arms and you will be able to read your title clear. When you come to the great day of the Lord, if you say "I did not do anything, or say anything to help any one, but here I am", you may hear that sad refrain, as it comes from our Lord's gracious lips, "Not he that repeateth the name but he that doeth the will".

I am detaining you longer than I ought; you are very patient. I should like to say something about the bread of life, which our Lord called Himself. All the four Gospels give an account of the feeding of the 5,000, but John alone mentions the teaching which was given with it. Here again we have the old man revealed. The other writers say "that there were only five loaves and two small fishes". John says, "there is a boy here".



That is the old man, he remembers the boy; and the critical point of the narrative is that boy. Men are always hungry, and Christ is ready to heal; the great trouble is to find the boy. If religion does not flourish in Providence, it is because you do not do as the boy did, give up all you have. The boy has the balance of power. When the boy is willing to part with his barley cakes, then the multitude will be fed.

Then we have the story of the opening of the eyes of the blind man. Here Jesus taught that He was the light of the world, and then He opened the eyes of the man. A good teacher said that when you want to know what Christianity is you should ask what took place between Jesus Christ and the man who was born blind; then you have it in the lowest terms. What happened then? Jesus looked upon him and said, "Go down this hill; there is a pool of water there; go and bathe your eyes in it and you will receive your sight". The man's cure depended upon his trust in Christ. But why should he obey? No man advised it. There was not one chance in a thousand that he would be cured. There was not a man in Jerusalem who would not say he was a fool. Many had washed their eyes in the pool of Siloam, and it had not helped them. But he went. The first step he took made him a Christian. A Christian is a man who does what Christ tells him to do, because Christ tells him to do it.

Then there is that next chapter, in which our Lord calls Himself the good shepherd. Do you see how John extends everything, and yet everything is rooted in the past? The best name God has in the Old Testament is found in the Twenty-third Psalm. That is a very good beginning, that is the kindergarten. What is the shepherd when you get up to the university? The kindergarten says, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters". John says, "The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep".

Then there came a day when some Greeks wanted to see Jesus, and as soon as the word came to Him He sent them no message, so far as we know. He looked up into heaven and said, "Father, the hour is come". They had begun to see the same truth which the Samaritans saw, that He was the Saviour of the Jews, but He was the Saviour of the world. "And I", He said, "If I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me, Jews and Gentiles". It was a new revelation, of which the church today is not worthy, for while we are living in luxury here in New England the missionary boards are halting for lack of bread.

Then there was the raising of Lazarus. Then the new sacrament of washing of feet, which John alone mentions. The symbol we take to represent Christianity is the cross of Christ. Another symbol that Jesus Christ gave to represent Christianity is a basin and a towel. They belong together. If you are not wearing that symbol, do not wear a cross. He came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many. That symbol, if carried out in His spirit, would move this town, if only every follower of Christ carried both the symbol and the spirit of the towel and the basin.

Then comes the wonderful fourteenth chapter of John, that goes back to the very beginning of things and shows how the life of Christ becomes our life, and how Christ literally lives in us. Then there follows the promise of the Holy Spirit, Who should come to abide with us forever. Then follows that marvelous prayer by the great High Priest, who bears all loving hearts up into the embrace of the loving Father and teaches us that eternal life is to know God and Him. No human presumption, since the beginning of the world to this time, has ever dared to couple its name with the name of the eternal God as essential to eternal life, as Christ does here. And yet He said, and John records it, as a definition of eternal life, "this is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and JESUS CHRIST Whom Thou hast sent". Thee and Me. What a wonderful assertion. Try to write your name, or the name of any one else between the name of Jehovah and this assertion of life.

The crucifixion is given more in detail than in the other Gospels. Then comes the last interviews and the confession of Thomas when he bears witness to Christ as the Messiah. And then the wonderful twenty-first chapter closes his record. It is the ordination chapter, with Christ's way of ordination. "Lovest thou Me?" "I do". "Feed My sheep". "Lovest thou Me?" "I do". "Feed My lambs". They have not chosen Him but He has chosen them and ordained them that they should go and bear fruit and that their fruit should remain.

I wish that I had another hour to dwell upon this book, but I must relieve you. This is the inspiring Gospel, these words are spirit and they are life. My beloved friend, Professor Thayer, left this as the central, all-conquering truth of Christianity: "Personal loyalty to a personal Master, the crucified, risen, reigning Christ". We like to read that story of centuries ago, how the venerable Bede had for his last labors the translation of this story of St. John into our words. We are told that he wrote while age crept upon him, and as he drew near the end of his work his strength failed him. His disciples urged him on. They cried, "Master, master, there is but one chapter more". The master wrote on until his strength was gone. His disciples said, "There is but one verse more". He summoned his failing strength and translated the one remaining verse. The master said, "It is finished". And they answered, "It is finished". He lay where he could fix his eyes upon the place where he used to pray, and there breathed out his spirit to that Saviour whom he had glorified. That is the way the Gospel of St. John came into our English speech.

## \*THE WORKS OF JESUS. I.—RESURRECTION.

(ST. JOHN 5 : 17-30.)

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The passage which has been assigned to me is so wondrously fruitful of great thought that one could spend months in the discussion of it without even approximately exhausting the themes which it contains. The student who attempts adequately to treat this chapter finds himself embarrassed much in the same way as the old hero in the Norse mythology, who, being asked to drain a great beaker, found at length that he was vainly seeking to empty the fathomless ocean. The temptation to turn aside to the many important topics suggested by this passage must be resisted. Let us confine ourselves to the specific subject in hand.

The power to raise the dead implies, of course, the power to impart life. And life can only be imparted by Him who is life. This is the central fact with regard to Jesus, upon which everything in this discussion must naturally hinge. Jesus came in the form of a man, but He differed from all other men in the fact that He Himself was life. Other men have received life, but He is essentially life. His most intimate friend said that "in Him was life, and the life was the light of men". He said of Himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life". When He met Death, as He did frequently, He did not shrink back from him as we do, but He said, "I am the resurrection and the life", and Death withdrew to his dark domain. He called God His own Father, and said, "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself". This was a very daring claim, and was bound to provoke hostility and criticism. But the lucidity of His mind and the perfection of His character require us to believe that He was very sane and very sincere when He said, "I am life". Moreover, He substantiated this claim in a most marvelous fashion by curing the sick and raising the dead. What a hollow sham His profession to be "life" would have been, if He meant merely, "I am able to give spiritual life", but showed no evidence of it in the fact that He could raise men from physical death; or if, having fallen asleep in Joseph's tomb, He had not awakened to receive the salutations of the angels. Life is a unity. We speak of life as physical as well as spiritual, and He who calls himself "life" must be the embodiment of all the forms that we call life. He must not only be immanent in nature, but must transcend nature. He must not only pervade the mind, but He must be far above the human mind. He must be the fountain of Spiritual life, and He must be the essence of life in all its various

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expressions. Now Jesus demonstrated this power in all the ranges of what we call life. The shrunken limb became normal and the diseased soul became healthy. We have never seen Him cure the sick or raise the dead, but we have discovered Him raising men from the deadness of sin to the life of conscious fellowship with God. And because we have witnessed this, we believe that He could go through all the hospitals of the world and turn out all the sick and impotent folk in abounding health, and that He could go through all the asylums of the world and make lunacy a forgotten malady; for He is "life".

I. We have in this wonderful passage, first of all, an illustration of Christ's power to impart life quite apart from any human agency, except the response of the human will. The chapter begins with the story of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda. Jesus beholds and addresses the unfortunate man, and arouses in his soul the latent desire to be made whole, and leads him out of helplessness into abundant life.

Now this passage is no sooner read than some hard-brained man who thinks more of mathematics than dogmatics, who would rather be logical than theological, declares that it is a story more worthy of the Middle Ages than of our times, and wants to know how the Bible can expect to hold the allegiance of intelligent people while it adheres to such preposterous tales, which remind one of the Church of St. Anne de Beaupré, or the statues of the bleeding saints, or the grotto of Lourdes. He does not know that textual criticism removes certain portions of the narrative which are offensive to reason. Our Revised Version recognizes the fact that a popular misconception of the day about angelic interference in the waters of a thermal spring has been transferred from the margin of an old manuscript into the body of the text, and has wisely omitted it. Yet this may be done without impairing the value of the story. On the other hand, it receives added strength. Those who throw over an entire narrative because some of its details do not appeal to their reason are as unwise as an old Dutch farmer, whose buildings were overrun with rats, and who resorted to the expedient of burning down the structures in order that he might deliver himself from the pests. There are persons today calling themselves logical who, because occasionally they discover a minor defect in the Scriptures, repudiate the whole system of Christianity. But after criticism has done its most, there remains the fact that Jesus did heal the impotent man. We cannot strike out the supernatural from the New Testament. It is here and everywhere. And while the skeptical may question the miraculous element in this healing, on the supposition that the man was possessed of such a disease as only needed for its removal an authoritative voice to make the victim's will assert itself, no such explanation will account for many other recorded miracles. And we have no occasion to make apology for Jesus. He is life, and life essentially. And what we call the miraculous is simply the extraordinary emergence of life, the unusual working of an activity that is constantly in procedure. Huxley admitted that there was no inherent reason for denying the credibility of a miracle; and we who have seen Jesus

working spiritual miracles in this twentieth century have no reason to discredit the story of His physical miracles in the first century. But Jesus was always chary of performing miracles. He had no disposition to perform miracles merely that men might be amazed. The wonder is that He performed so few; that He should have been so self-controlled as not to be always performing miracles. His miracles were for signs; they were to signify something. They are as different from the miracles of the Middle Ages as can be conceived. There is no moral significance in a story of healing by the bones of saints. But in the miracles which Jesus works there is an essential moral significance, a spiritual lesson, a type of eternal life which the student cannot possibly overlook. John seems to have fallen into the habit of his Master's mind, and thought always of His miracles in relation to divine truth. Did Jesus heal a withered hand? Then it was an indication that He could cure a diseased soul. Did He by wondrous multiplication of fishes and loaves feed five thousand men and women? Then it was a mark of the fact that He was Himself the Bread of Life. Was He able to open the eyes of the blind man? Then it was a sublime illustration of the fact that Jesus is the Light of the World. Could He cure an impotent man at the pool of Bethesda? Then it was a type of the fact that He could restore those who were spiritually impotent. Did He raise Lazarus from the dead? Then it was to prove that He was the Resurrection and the Life. So this story has a very close relation to the whole power of Jesus as "Resurrection" and as "Life".

II. In the next place, we have here the self-vindication of Jesus on the basis of His filial relation to God the Father, and His essential oneness with Him. He is charged with a violation of the Sabbath law; it is an unproved accusation. Indeed, by the strictest interpretation of the Mosaic code He could not have been convicted. It would have been an easy thing to dispose of this accusation by recourse to the code and to history. On other occasions, when similar accusations were lodged against Him, He took this course, but in the present instance He does not defend Himself in this fashion. He ignores all such considerations, and with a simple thrust strikes at the core of the whole matter when He says, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work". The activity which characterizes God is not limited by any narrow Sabbath laws which have been passed for the benefit of mankind. From the hour when His creative work was concluded, and He pronounced His work good, until this hour He has not ceased to pour Himself out in the sustaining of His universe, in the impartation of life to His creatures, in the work of redemption for those who are lost. "My Father and I are one. He worketh until now, and I work. His will is mine; His work is My work. At any moment I am ready at His command to do whatsoever He desireth". Instantly the charge of an infraction of the Sabbath law is dropped. His accusers pass over the whole matter, and charge Him with identifying Himself with God, and, therefore, with being guilty of blasphemy. Their instinct was correct, their motive contemptible. It is in the assumption that He is God, and that life proceeds from Him inevitably, that

the heart of the trouble rests. But we need not discuss that subject now. If that is not true there is no truth in the New Testament Scriptures that one need hold for a single instant. And if that is not truth, it is the greatest of all folly that we should come together to study this Gospel.

Passing now from this general statement of the basis on which He has assumed authority to impart life to men, Jesus bursts forth, first, into a general statement of His divine right to raise the dead and judge them, and then to a more particular statement, in a concrete and explicit form, of His rights in the moral and external domains now and forever with relation to the destiny of mankind. He virtually says to these accusers, "You profess to be scandalized because I am supposed to have violated the Sabbath laws, and because I have claimed to be divine in My own person; what will you say when I tell you that all power is mine? that I am the judge of the quick and the dead, and that by My own voice I shall call men from the tomb, and in the end shall be the final and absolute arbiter of the destinies of human beings? For, as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live".

III. Again, the healing of the impotent man forms a concrete illustration in symbolism of the spiritual resurrection. "Wilt thou be made whole?" is the challenge of Jesus. The man hears the question, responds to it, and by the expenditure of his own will, in the exercise of what we call faith, takes up his bed and walks; and goes out to sin no more that he may have no worse thing come upon him than he has been suffering these thirty-eight years. "Wilt thou be made whole?" is the demand of Jesus now and always. Those who hear His voice and respond to His call are those who live; and those who will not heed His voice are those who cannot live because they refuse to accept His life as a free gift. "Wilt thou be made whole?" Do you want to be made sound? Are you eager to have life and health? That is a very crucial question. It is the question which Jesus is always asking. And it is not everyone who is sick, and murmurs about it, that really wants to be well. There are many people who do not want to get health; and many people like to tell you of their diseases, and the sufferings they have experienced at the hands of many physicians, and the number of hospitals they have been in or visited for treatment, in order that they may awake in you the impulse of sympathy. And the same thing is true in the moral realm. Not every one who professes himself sick and talks about his being so needy desires to be well spiritually. Lord Byron developed a sort of foolish self-pity by such a method. He desired to



describe himself as a sort of unfortunate victim of fleshly lusts, and he gloried in his shame. A man recently said that he would rather give ten thousand dollars to retain his delicious thirst for alcoholic beverages than to have that thirst removed. He had sunken into that insensibility which prevents a man from hearing the voice and responding to the call which summons to life. Do you want to be healed? is the challenge of Jesus. Are you willing to launch your personal will into the divine will, and to arise from the dead? They who hear the voice of the Son of God and respond, live; and they who do not heed and respond are dead.

IV. It follows naturally that judgment ensues. It is in the very fact of men's attitude toward this call of Jesus. What He says in this connection about judgment being committed to Him is simply the inevitable consequence of His offer of life to men, and of the position they take with reference to it. Perhaps you have read Fenelon's dialogue between Ulysses and Grillus, the man whom Circe had turned into a hog. Ulysses wished to bring him back to manhood. But Grillus would not consent. He said, "No, the life of a hog is so much pleasanter". "But", said Ulysses, "Do you make no account of eloquence, poetry and music?" "No, I would rather grunt than be eloquent like you". "But", asked Ulysses further, "How can you endure this nastiness and stench?" Grillus replied, "It all depends on the taste; the odor is sweeter to me than that of amber, and the filth than the nectar of the gods". When men sink into the insensibility of degrading sin they put themselves in the place of judgment; and the judgment of the hereafter will base itself upon the position we have occupied in this probationary sphere. John LeFarge says, "When a man passes a criticism upon a picture, it is the picture that judges the man, and not the man who judges the picture". The men who receive the offer of Christ, and pass upon it, are judged by the attitude in which they present themselves to His appeal. They that hear the Son of God shall live. Others cannot see life. Even as the impotent man at the Pool of Bethesda would have been helpless to the day of his death, had he not responded to the call of Christ to take up his bed and walk forth into the world.

V. And now we see that, advancing from this general statement with regard to resurrection from spiritual deadness, Jesus addresses Himself to the great question of the physical resurrection. He does not say that He is now calling the dead from the tomb, but "the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation". This is the supreme, the only satisfactory and complete argument in favor of a future life. Natural immortality is an unprovable hypothesis; it may belong to us as our birth-right, but the Bible does not insist that this is true. And the argument from analogy falls to pieces in the presence of the severest scientific investigation of our day. No man who stands by the bedside of a dying friend and observes the process of dissolution can see anything in the phenomena of man's death that differentiates it from the death of an animal. With-

out the resurrection of the New Testament in the person of Jesus Christ, there is no absolute foundation upon which one can rest a hope of the future life. Plato may "reason well"; so well that some of his disciples are persuaded to commit suicide in order to reach a life of bliss; but there is no argument from the day of Plato to our own that can support the soul that questions the fact of a future life. The only sure foundation of such a hope is the personal guarantee of Him who is "Life", who shall some day send His voice thrilling through the world and call the just and unjust out of the tomb to receive judgment. But this promise cuts in opposite directions. It says that the unjust, as well as the just, shall come at Christ's command. There is no escaping His summons. "Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me. Yea the darkness hideth not from Thee, but the night shineth as the day'". There is no escape from Him except escape in Him. There is no way to avoid the wrath of the Just One, except to hide under the shadow of His wings. Martin Luther said, "If I saw Jesus Christ standing before me with a drawn sword, I would still fling myself into His arms". "Ye will not come unto Me that you might have life", is the sad plaint of the Master of Life and Conqueror of Death. Jesus is the life, the resurrection, the only hope of eternal life, the judge of the quick and the dead, the apportioner of the rewards of the men who have been hearers of His voice and have known His love, the distributer of recompense to those who in deep, moral insensibility have refused to hear His voice and have chosen death instead of life. This is the solemn lesson of the hour.

## \* THE WORKS OF JESUS. II.—JUDGMENT.

(ST. JOHN 5 : 17-30.)

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I have been asked for an exegesis of these few verses, John 5 : 17-30, which, in the mind of the committee, teach the important doctrine of a general judgment with the Lord Jesus Christ as judge. Our task would be simplified very greatly if we could assume either of two extreme positions, each of which has its advocates. Mr. Campbell Morgan declares, "There is no warrant for preaching the final judgment at all. The messengers of Christ were never commissioned to do so. They were sent to preach the gospel, and the only reference to the fact of judgment which has any place in preaching is such as is necessary for urging the claims of Christ upon men". But one might as well say that the apostles were not commissioned to preach the new birth, the punishment of sin, the rewards of righteousness, or any other of the great doctrines. It would be interesting to hear this man define the "gospel" of which he speaks.

Whether the apostles understood as clearly as Mr. Morgan the meaning of their mission may perhaps be questioned, but it is certain that the fact of a general judgment had a conspicuous place in their teaching.

Moreover, if we are to preach Christ, it is our duty to preach Him in all His offices, not only as priest but as prophet and king; not only as the atoning Saviour, but as the authoritative teacher and reigning sovereign. His functions, according to the Gospel, are not only to redeem but to instruct and govern. As ruler He is also judge, and the gospel-preaching is defective which does not thus present Him.

We might do, also, as one learned essayist in these meetings has already done, viz.: deny that the words in vs. 28, 29 were ever uttered by the Master, but are an interpolation by a later hand. In that case they would not require an exegesis. The assurance with which some men erect a personal and purely subjective standard of what ought to be said, and reject everything which does not conform to it, is refreshing. It is an easy way to dispose of an unpleasant truth to say Jesus never uttered it or, if He did, He did not know what He was talking about. Whatever doubts these men may have concerning the inerrancy of the Scriptures, they seem well assured of their own.

Now I am disposed to accept this passage as genuine, and for at least two reasons.

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\* Delivered at the Fifth Conference, held at the Central Baptist Church, February 10, 1904.



First, its statements are in perfect accord with the teaching of the Synoptic Gospels and with the writings of all the apostles, as far as they have expressed themselves on the subject.

In Matt. 25:31-33, Jesus says, "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from the other as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats". In his memorable sermon on Mars Hill, Paul declared, "He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). In His epistles He more than once in substance affirms that "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ". The revelator in Apocalyptic vision—"Saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And \* \* \* the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works". You will say, perhaps, that this is imaginative and poetical. But, taken in connection with the general trend of the New Testament, who that gives any doctrinal value to this book can doubt that the writer is describing the stupendous event toward which time is hurrying us all?

The doctrine of a general judgment cannot be wrested from the New Testament teaching without violence. The passage before us is in harmony with this teaching, and is therefore presumptively genuine.

Secondly, this passage is in harmony with the discourse of which it forms a part. It marks, it is true, a great advance in thought, but it is a natural development and not an obtrusion, an irruption, into the discussion in hand. This, I think, will be clear if we glance comprehensively, though briefly, at the entire incident.

Our Lord had cured the impotent man at the pool known as Bethesda. It was on the Sabbath. Contrary to Jewish custom, at the Master's bidding the man took up his bed and was going his way when he was accosted by the Jews, "It is the Sabbath day; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed". He quoted the authority of Jesus, saying, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, take up thy bed and walk". Thus the controversy was shifted, and the Jews in the fierceness of their rage sought to slay Jesus. In justification of His act, and to substantiate His claims elsewhere made that the "Son of Man was Lord of the Sabbath", He said, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work". This still further inflamed their anger, and "They sought the more to kill Him because He had not only broken the Sabbath but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God". To the charge of lawlessness was added that

of blasphemy. Notice the progress, also, in the defence. Jesus does not deny that He claims equality with the Father; on the contrary, He admits it and proceeds to justify Himself in so doing. He emphasizes the perfect accord between Himself and His Father, and then makes the still graver assertion, doubtless with remembrance of the recent healing in mind, "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will".

Nothing could be more natural than to pass from this suggestion of quickening the dead—meaning probably the spiritually dead—awakening them into new life and power, as He Himself had restored the paralytic, to the associated thought of the judgment. The fact that the Father had given this great power into His hands was put forth as an additional refutation of the charges made against Him. He was to act as God, "That all men might honor the Son as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him".

He moves forward in the argument with a regal majesty. He, the life-giver and judge of men, declares that for those who hear His voice and respond, the great crises are passed already. They already have within them the beginning of eternal life and witness of their justification. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and cometh not into judgment; but is passed from death unto life. \* \* \* The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself. And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man". Our Lord regards His countrymen, and, indeed, all unregenerate men, as dead in trespasses and sins. Though physically alive, they are spiritually dead. They are as helpless as the impotent man in the porches of Bethesda. He, as the life-giver, stands and calls. He says to them as He said to the other, "Wilt thou be made whole?" Happy, thrice happy, those who hear; for those who hear shall live.

It is interesting to note here the word rendered "wilt". It is *theleis*, a word conveying the idea of volition, of purpose. It is not *boulei*, simple desire. It is as though He sought in this man a purpose born of faith to respond to His life-giving power. He found what He sought, the word was spoken, and that weak and pain-racked body thrilled and glowed with the new life.

He stands and calls, "If any man thirsts, come unto Me, drink and live". If His words find response, if any hear, they shall live. If they fail to hear, they continue in the embrace of death.

Thus Jesus judges the world today. By their attitude toward Him men are justified and live, or are condemned and die. "For this is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he

that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God". Life is a continuous judgment day. By their acceptance or by their rejection of the light men are determining their destiny.

This is the stupendous claim put forth by the Saviour. By their relation to Him as life-giver and judge, the fate of men is settled. It is not strange that He detected incredulity and wonder in the faces of His hearers at such a tremendous assertion; but He does not hesitate; He does not soften or mitigate in the slightest the significance of His words. On the contrary He advances yet farther; there is a constant crescendo in His claims. "Are you startled at what I have said? Does it shock you that I claim to judge those now on earth? "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear My voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. The voice which now speaks to you, and which many of you refuse to hear, shall sound through the regions where dwell the departed, and hearing, they shall obey its imperative command and come forth to receive at My hand their eternal award". This marks the culmination of the Saviour's work as life-giver and judge. From the act of supreme authority—judgment, He passes to the supreme act of power—the resurrection of the dead. Then will the universe receive final demonstration of His sublime statement, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die".

Now I submit that there is nothing violent or irrelevant in this reference by our Lord to the general judgment in this discourse. It comes in the natural development of His discussion with His enemies. His claims being challenged, He defended them. His authority to supersede their petty traditions rests upon His oneness with the Father. His Father worketh hitherto, why should not He work? He was one with the Father. He was entrusted with divine authority and power until the honor of the Father was indissolubly inwrought with His.

As Godet says: "This work of moral and physical restoration, carried on hitherto by God, passes henceforth into the hands of Jesus but gradually and according to the measure of His growing capacity. Till His baptism He had wrought only human works. From that time He begins to work isolated miracles of bodily and spiritual resurrection, specimens of His great future work. From the time of His elevation to glory, He realizes by Pentecost the moral resurrection of humanity; and finally by His return on the day of His advent, and by His victory over the last enemy, death, which shall be its consequence, He will work in the physical domain, the universal resurrection. Then only will the work of the Father have passed wholly into His hands".

Jesus, as life-giver and judge must be no less than God, manifest in the flesh. As one has said: "The more we ponder the stupendous claim which Christ makes, the more must we feel that it is superhuman authority which



speaks to us here, or superhuman arrogance". He, Himself, seemed to realize the force of this dilemma, for He said: "If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true". Not that He falsified in His claims, but that He did not meet the demands of Jewish law by which a thing must be established by two or more witnesses. "I am willing", He says, "to submit to this requirement. I have My witnesses and will produce them.

"Ye sent unto John, to him in whose light ye were willing to rejoice. He bore witness to Me, it is true, but I have a greater witness than he.

"First of all, there are My works. They clearly demonstrate My divine office and power. Nicodemus was right; no man can do the works which I do except God be with Him. Ye are absolutely inexcusable for not receiving Me. If I had not done among you the works which none other man had done ye had not had sin, but now ye have no cloak for your sin. Now ye have both seen and hated both Me and My Father". Jesus as the divine ambassador brought with Him His credentials. Whatever weight may now be given the evidential value of miracles, it is doubtless true that He regarded them as a mark of His authority as the Son of God.

Secondly. The Father bears witness. "The Father which sent Me hath borne witness to Me". Our Lord here refers to His baptism, when as the Spirit descended upon Him, the Father's voice declared: "This is My beloved Son, hear ye Him". He must have referred also to that marvelous scene upon the mountain, when Moses, the law-giver and Elijah, greatest of the prophets, representing the old dispensation, came out of heaven long enough to do homage to Him who was to supersede the law, and in whom the prophecies were to find their fulfilment. These representatives of a passing era faded away, leaving before the amazed apostles the solitary figure of their Lord, while in their ears rang the words: "This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him".

Thirdly. Our Saviour brings forward as a final witness the Jewish Scriptures. In Moses, in the prophets, and indeed in all the Scriptures is found testimony as to the character and work of the Messiah. The portrait there drawn finds its original in Jesus of Nazareth. So clear and striking and accurate the likeness that Moses himself, in whom the Jews trusted, would condemn them for rejecting their Saviour. "There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me".

I have thus simply indicated what I conceive to be the teaching of this passage. If I am correct, every day is in a sense a judgment day. Jesus is speaking to men now engrossed in business, consumed by ambition, drunken with pleasures, sodden in sin. He cries to them: "Wilt thou be made whole?" If they hear, they shall live. Oh that His voice might be heard above the din of trade, the rush of commerce, the shouts and laughter of revelry! Alas! how many refuse to listen. Like the Jews they would away with Him. Like the Jews, too, all such call down unutterable woes upon themselves. His blood be on us and our children forever!

His word is true. "When the Son of Man shall come in glory, and

all His holy angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left". Ah! that right hand and left hand! "You seem, sir", said Mrs. Adams to Dr. Johnson, when the fear of death and the judgment lay heavy upon him, "You seem to forget the merits of our Redeemer". "Madam", said the honest old man, "I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer; but my Redeemer has said that He will set some on His right hand and some on His left". It were well if men were to remember that there is a right hand and a left. There is inextricable confusion here, but there will be a separation there. It is sometimes impossible here to discern between those who serve God and those who do not; but then every mask will be torn off and every dissembler revealed in his true character. I have stood in the dimly lighted room of a photographer watching with great interest the development of plates. As they lie side by side there is no apparent difference between them. But when they are dipped into the developing fluid, a change gradually takes place. On this appears the sweet face of a pure and innocent child; on that the harsh and angular features of one who has seen much of toil and hardship; on another the coarse and bloated countenance of a sensualist; and on still another the fierce and brutish expression of the hardened criminal. Under the magic of the photographer's art, every characteristic is transcribed with literal exactness upon the sensitive plate and faithfully and permanently preserved. Thus in the blazing light of the judgment, men will stand revealed as they are and not as they seem.

Ah! that right hand and left hand! Only two classes; only two destinies. Every man must stand in one of these classes. Every man must enter upon one or the other of the two destinies, which will be decided by his attitude toward the life-giver and judge. By a fixed and unalterable gravitation every man will go to his own place, whither his affinities bear him. One has beautifully and powerfully said: "There are two twilights—the twilight of evening and the twilight of morning; and therefore God's question to us is not how much light have we, but which way do we face, to the night or to the day? Not what art thou, but what wilt thou, is the supreme question. It is the answer to this which sets some on the right hand and some on the left".

## \* THE SECRET OF JESUS' LIFE

(ST. JOHN 5:30.)

† BY REV. JOHN BALCOM SHAW, D. D.,

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There are four Scriptures, all the sayings of Jesus and all found in the Fourth Gospel, which define for me the basic secret of Jesus' life. John 6: 38—"For I came down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me"—doing the will of God the *purpose* of Christ's life. John 4: 34—"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me"—doing the will of God the *pleasure* of Christ's life, its very sustenance and inspiration, its enjoyment and satisfaction. John 5: 30—"Because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which sent Me"—doing the will of God, the *pursuit* or *principle* of Christ's life. John 8: 29—"I do always those things that please Him"—doing the will of God the *practice* of Christ's life.

This was our Lord's unique and unqualified claim. Was it substantiated? Did He give full proof to the world that doing God's will was the purpose, the pleasure, the pursuit and the practice of His life? That He always diligently sought to know, and earnestly set Himself to do God's will is beyond dispute. A study of His prayer-life fully attests this. "Strong Son of God" though He was, aware of His appointed mission in the world as He must have been, yet was He constantly asking His Father what direction His way should take or what turns in the way already taken He should make. "What wilt Thou have Me to do?" was His perpetual inquiry. If ever anyone had less need than another to pray, was it not Jesus Christ? And yet we find that no one living upon our earth ever prayed so much as did He. He alone has perfectly obeyed the apostolic injunction, "Pray without ceasing". Prayer stood closely related to all the great events of His life—His baptism, His temptation, His transfiguration, His agony in the garden, His crucifixion. The night before He chose the twelve, He was until morning in the mountain alone with His Father. When the Roman guard came to arrest Him He was by Himself in prayer, and did He not die with a prayer upon His lips? What a testimony to His prayer-life it was that the disciples who took the walk to Emmaus with Him the day of His resurrection did not identify Him till they heard His voice in prayer. We sometimes feel that at best we are but children and dare not stir a step alone. This was Jesus' characteristic and continuous attitude. He was supremely the son of solitude, yet He was preeminently a man among men, ever going about doing good.

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\* Delivered at the Fifth Conference, held at the Central Baptist Church, February 10, 1904.

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This constant converse with His Father was the source of His wisdom, His patience and poise, His steadfastness and strength, His cheerfulness and courage. It was this which made

"His face a mirror of His holy mind,  
His mind a temple for all lovely things to flock to  
And inhabit".

Living such an uninterrupted prayer-life as this, He came to know the will of God fully and explicitly, and His life was lived with one sole commanding passion,—to make that will known to men. The words He spoke, the deeds He wrought, the influence breathing itself forth from His person, His character and life, were but the utterance, the exaltation of that will. In whatsoever capacity He appears, as the Messiah of Matthew, or the servant of Mark, or the universal Saviour of Luke, or the divine Son of God of John, He is everywhere and always the synonym, the embodiment, the interpretation of the will of God—the declaration of what God thinks, what God desires, what He purposes and what He delights in—in a word what God is and what He desires man to be.

"On one great mission bent,  
He sped for God, forever unencumbered  
Of earthly clogs, whereby our souls are numbered  
In glory excellent".

There can be no question, then, but what He always sought to know and follow the will of the Father. That stands forever true. But did He perfectly do that will? In other words, it is beyond dispute that doing the will of God was the purpose, the pleasure and the pursuit of His life. Was this the actual practice of Jesus?

1. The consciousness of Christ is no slight or uncertain factor in this problem. All the laws of psychology must, do give it emphasis. A sane, true, high soul, such as Jesus confessedly was, could have had none other than a trustworthy consciousness. When, therefore, looking into the face of His Father, He said: "I do always the things that please Him;" and again, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me", He established the strongest possible presumption in favor of His claim.

2. Another test is His Father's unqualified approval of Him. This approval would, of course, not have been given if He had failed to do the will of God. That approval is everywhere implied, and the fact that only once did Jesus feel Himself without it, and that when circumstances for which He was not responsible had clouded His consciousness, strongly confirms the implication. Twice, however, this approval was explicitly spoken by the Father from heaven. First at the baptism: "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased", a word which doubtless covered the whole of His life up to that point and is a suggestive key which unlocks for us the so-called "hidden years"; and again at the transfiguration, when, as St. Peter tells us, "He received from God the Father, honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased".

3. But better than His self-consciousness even, still better than His Father's implied or spoken approval, was the sinless life He set before the world. His sinlessness was more than a self-preferred claim—it was an accepted fact. No man did convict Him of sin. The prince of this world did come but found nothing in Him. His contemporaries testified to His purity, and succeeding ages have confirmed the testimony, until an apostrophe like that of our Sidney Lanier to-day awakens universal applause:

“ But Thee, but Thee, O sovereign seer of time,  
 But Thee, O poets' poet, wisdom's tongue,  
 But Thee, O man's best man, O love's best love,  
 O perfect life in perfect labor writ,  
 O all men's Comrade, Servant, King or Priest,—  
 What *if* or *yet*, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,  
 What least defect, or shadow of defect,  
 What rumor, tattled by an enemy,  
 Or inference loose, what lack of grace,  
 Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or death's—  
 Oh! what amiss may I forgive in Thee,  
 Jesus, good Paragon, Thou Crystal Christ ?”

In view of these facts are we not justified in accepting it as an absolute fact that Jesus did perfectly obey His Father, and that His claim is thus firmly established, that doing the will of God was not only the purpose, the pleasure and the pursuit of His life, but also its actual and constant practice. No other soul was as equal to Wasson's quaint confession as was the Man of Galilee :

“ If I would pray,  
 I've naught to say,  
 But this : That God would be God still.  
 For grace to give,  
 So still to give,  
 And sweeter than my wish His will ”.

Is not our next logical question this : What was the personal, practical product of such perfect practicing of the will divine ? What sort of a character-structure did it rear ? What type or pattern did it leave to the world ? In a word, what kind of a life did it produce ? Theoretically, the effect of such a practicing of the will of God should have been the ideal, the perfect. If the will of God is the best possible will, if it justifies the Bible's representations of it as “ That good and acceptable and perfect will ” of God, if John's dictum be true, “ He that doeth the will of God abideth forever ”, then three things may be demanded of such a person :

1. That the perfect doing of that perfect will of God should produce the highest possible character. Why ? Because God is the Creator, and only He can make such laws, which, when obeyed, will insure one's being its highest end.

2. That the perfect doing of the perfect will of God should bring the greatest possible happiness. God is the great Father and He would make only those laws for His children, which, on being obeyed, would contribute to their fullest happiness.

3. That the perfect doing of the perfect will of God should result in the longest possible continuance of being. God is eternal and legislates, therefore, only for eternity. God is man's great benefactor, and, where His will is not intercepted, must preserve my soul "From this time forth and even forevermore". To put it succinctly, complete perfection, complete pleasure and complete permanence must follow from the full surrender of the human will to the will divine.

What do we find to have been the case in our Lord's life? Did He not fulfil each of these three great conditions? He was not only the noblest, the purest, the holiest character of time, but He is the only perfect man our race has produced. Human imagination can picture to itself no higher order of being than He. Do not the Norsemen's title of "The White Christ", and Lanier's representation of Him as "The Crystal Christ" command universal consent?

What of the second test? Did not perfect obedience to the Father's will yield Him complete happiness? He was "The man of sorrows", but He was "Anointed with the oil of gladness" above His fellows. He was able to rise above more trial, temptation, opposition and hatred than has come to any other being on our earth, and yet He was calm, serene, brave, and glad through it all. "Who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God".

Apply the third test—the longest possible existence. Is He not by all odds the first of the immortals? Was not death powerless to hold Him? Is He not now alive forevermore? Has He not the keys of hades and death? He who rests his faith in Him may sing with the utmost confidence:

"To Thy beyond no fear I give,  
Because Thou livest, I live.  
Unsleeping Friend, why should I wake  
Troublesome thought to take  
For any strange tomorrow? In Thy hand  
Days and eternities like flowers expand

"Odors from blossoming worlds unknown  
Across my path are blown;  
Thy robes trail myrrh and spice  
From farthest paradise;  
I walk through Thy fair universe with Thee,  
And sun me in Thine immortality".

And now, having reached this high point, where are we? We have looked upon His claim that God's will was the guiding star, nay, the rising sun, of His life; we have examined the facts upon which that master claim rests, and assured ourselves that it was warrantable and conclusive. We have scrutinized the effect of Christ's obedience and found it yielded a normal product, answering the soul's threefold aspiration for perfection, pleasure and permanence. Are we not, therefore, face to face with the question as to what is the essential, practical import of all this for us? Surely it can have but one explicit and ethical meaning for us. It is this:



that if we would come out at a like goal, we must take the same path Jesus chose. Do we want to attain to the highest character? Do we want abiding happiness? Do we crave a true immortality? All this has but one secret—doing the will of the Father in heaven. Until Christ's secret is ours we shall not fulfil the genius of our being; we shall chafe and fret, be ill at ease and generally unhappy; and the life within us, instead of expanding, will grow shallow and negative and gradually die out.

“Have you ever thought, my friend,  
As you daily toil and plod  
In the busy paths of men,  
How still are the ways of God?”

“Have you ever paused in the din  
Of traffic's insistent cry,  
To think of the calm in the cloud,  
Of the peace in your glimpse of the sky?”

“Go out in the silent fields,  
That quietly yield you meat,  
And let them rebuke your noise,  
Whose patience is still and sweet”.

Ah! this is our difficulty. Our wills are in command, and not God's will. Victor Hugo once said, “Men do not lack strength, but will”. It is God's will they lack. By so much as that will is not ours, by so much our characters are defective, our hearts discordant, our lives de-vitalized. No one has got closer to this truth, it would seem to me, than our Quaker poet, who has in a single verse forever signified the truth:

“And so I sometimes think our prayers  
Might well be merged in one,  
And nest and perch and hearth and church  
Repeat, ‘Thy will be done’”.

This step but leads to another. Having come face to face with this secret of secrets, we ask most eagerly how we may make it ours. How may we be sure that we have taken God's will? We do well to ask that question, for there is a great deal of talk these days about absolute surrender, which is ignorant, unscriptural, unphilosophical, and generally wide of the mark. In many quarters the word surrender has become scarcely more than a shibboleth. People talk glibly of surrender who do not know what surrender means.

(a) To begin with, it is not a thing of the emotions, but solely of the will. It is, therefore, a step to be taken deliberately, dispassionately, and, above all, positively. I have known people to declare their surrender when they were under excited feeling, who were at the time as little capable of taking so serious a step as a child.

(b) It is a thing of fact and not fancy. A prominent religious teacher, speaking to a great conference of Christian people, a few years ago, suggested that only when one could sign his name to a blank sheet of paper and hand it back to God for Him to fill in as He chose, was he really justified in professing surrender. I submit that this is a specious test, and its

effect most unwholesome. Imagine Christ working Himself up into such an unreal state. He dealt with the will of God as it came to Him at the time, and not as it might address itself to Him at some future juncture. The call which God's will makes to us in the present is the only true test of surrender. God has put me in a hard place; do I accept it from Him and in no way fight against the appointment? My position is not what I like, but God keeps me in it. Am I content therewith? My life is an aimless, circumscribed one—a tread mill, a tedious round, the dead level of the commonplace. Am I willing to keep on and be cheerful, if God does not turn me upon another path?

(c) And this, mark you well, is only the first step—the beginning. Surrender, as I understand it, is a compound act. I had almost said a complex act. It is a ladder of three rungs, set far apart and mounted only by long, hard strides. The first rung is *submission* to God's will—resignation, as we more commonly express it. The second is *obedience* to God's will. Not merely accepting it negatively, as if there were no other alternative, but giving ourselves gladly, fully, loyally, to its fulfilment. The third is *exalting* God's will—accounting it and rejoicing in it as the best possible will. Faber was standing on this top rung when he breathed that immortal prayer:

“ I worship thee, sweet will of God,  
And all thy ways adore;  
And every day I live, I seem  
To love thee more and more.

“ He always wins who sides with God;  
To him no chance is lost.  
God's will seems sweetest to him when  
It triumphs at his cost.

“ Ill that He blesses is our good,  
And unblest good is ill,  
And all is right that seems most wrong,  
If it be His sweet will”.

How many of us have brought our feet to that rung? Until we have, we cannot make claim to full surrender to the will of God, but if we have reached that high and holy station, we are fast becoming our truest and best selves; it will be easy to be brave and sweet and reposeful, and natural for us to be happy; and we shall rise above all ordinary, temporal limitations, passing out of the bondage of the material into the glorious life and liberty of the Son of God.

“ To be made with Thee one spirit,  
Is the boon I longingly ask.  
To have no bars 'twixt my soul and Thine,  
Myself, Thy servant, for any task.  
Life, life, I may enter through Thee, the door,  
Saved and sheltered forevermore”.

## \*FAITH IN CHRIST DEMANDED BY GOD AND THE SPRING OF RELIGIOUS ACTION.

(ST. JOHN 6:29.)

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It is needless for me to enter into introductions. You have already, in this course of study and addresses, had the Gospel of John, the "Pearl of the Gospels", analyzed by competent, scholarly and devout men. I said devout men, because it remains forever true that, "If any man willet to do His will, he shall know of the teaching whether it is of God" (John 7:17). Devoutness is a key which unlocks the choicest treasures of such a Gospel as that of John. One must sit fixedly with him in his quiet chambers of meditation, and in the atmosphere of peace, if one would think his way into the heart of his Gospel. The simple historic facts could be somewhat easily narrated, but such an interpretation of them, and such a philosophy of them, and such a living of them over again as John gives could come only out of a heart and mind which had long been occupied by Jesus Christ. The facts are given, but they are the facts explained after long pondering in the luminous presence of the Holy Spirit. His Gospel is peculiarly, therefore, food and drink to the soul which hungers and thirsts after Christ.

I will proceed at once to my assigned service and theme which was phrased for me, "Faith in Christ Demanded by God and the Spring of Religious Action", John 6:29—"This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent".

There is a kind of faith which Jesus both commends and commands as an indispensable prerequisite or condition in order to His healing of men's infirmities, but which, in so far as we have any evidence, is not the saving faith through which the soul is knit to Christ. Significantly, it occurs always in connection with miracles of healing.

The Roman Centurion (Matt. 8:10) is emphatically commended for his faith in expecting the healing of his servant, and yet there is no evidence that he was then or became afterward a disciple of Christ. His faith was not of the kind which knits the soul to Christ as Saviour and Lord. The men who brought the palsied man (Matt. 9:2) and let him down before Christ to be healed, were also strongly commended for their faith, although there is no evidence that they were in any sense disciples of Christ. Indeed, the circumstances point inferentially and strongly to the fact that they were not disciples, but only a part of the great multitude who had seen the miracles

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of Christ in other places. The two blind men whose history is given in Matt. 9 : 27-31, were given sight with the words, "According to your faith be it done unto you".

Jesus had previously asked them, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" His ability to give them sight was the only point on which their faith fastened itself. There is no evidence that they received any other benefit from Christ than that of eyesight. Apparently they were not joined to Him in discipleship, although they did afterwards spread abroad His fame as a miracle worker who had special ability to give blind men their sight. Blind Bartimeus (Mark 10 : 46-52) also had a faith which centered in his belief in Christ's ability to give him sight, but there is no convincing evidence that his faith embraced Christ in any inwardly saving sense. It is a mere possibility that v. 52 may indicate some form of discipleship when it says, "And straightway he received his sight and followed Him in the way". All of these are illustrations of a faith which our Lord commended and without which He would not perform His miracles. It was a condition required of man but was of a sort (*sui generis*) which must be described or defined by the results affected through it.

What, then, is this faith and wherein does it differ from that faith which is always allied with inward union with Christ in salvation? This faith rests on evidences of miracle working which they had seen or had heard reported in definite details. They believed, on the ground of what they had seen and heard, that Jesus had ability to heal, and this confident assent to His power was their faith. It did not bind them to discipleship. It did not reach a state of soul-surrender to Christ, nor a vital union of the soul with its rightful Lord. It did not involve an inward moral obedience of heart and life to the rule of Christ. They were not, in any evangelical sense, believers in Christ.

But yet this faith, as far as it went, rested on the same grounds as the higher faith, which is both the condition and the expression of the regenerated life. Both kinds of faith alike rest on evidence, the first kind on evidence of the ability or power of Christ, the second kind not only on the power of Christ, but on the perfectness of His moral character, on His claim to be divine, and on His ability to give eternal life. If several instances had been definitely reported to the blind men, and especially if they had been witnesses to a few alleged cures, where the King had healed men, they would have believed in the ability of the King to heal, somewhat regardless of what sort of a moral character the King might possess. I do not see that the faith of these men implied any assent to the moral character of Christ, or any acceptance of His divine claims. It reached only to the point that He had ability to heal, as was abundantly attested by evidences of such healing already accomplished among the people.

Now saving faith rests on this evidence also, but goes so far beyond it as to give it a wholly different and unique quality. It assents to His ability to heal, His character as Holy and perfect, His claim to be the Son of God, and such a voluntary embracing of Christ, as issues in a submission

of all the will and the life to the authority and the rule of Christ. The first sort of faith is that ordinary confidence which arises upon presentation of certain evidences, which seem reasonable, that a man has power or ability. Such faith may lead one to cast one's self on that ability for help, at least to the necessary extent. It may be for physical healing only as in these illustrations from the Gospels. It does not imply any radical change in the inner life or in the outward conduct.

The second sort of faith is in the sphere of the moral life where there is voluntary assent to the truth that there can be but one ruler, lawgiver and Lord, and that one, Jesus Christ, to whom the soul yields unhesitating obedience and love. This faith means a radical change of both inner life and outward conduct. It is the invariable accompanier of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, and expresses the new attitude of the soul toward its new found Saviour and Lord.

I have been thus careful to analyze these two sorts of faith and to differentiate them because they are both still present in human life as much as when our Lord was here in the flesh and dwelt among us. Men may believe that Jesus Christ is able to do what He says that He can do, and even assent to His claim to be divine, and assent to His miracle-working ability, and this faith may be a very genuine one of its sort, but still fall far short of that faith which joins the soul to Christ in a vital union, so that a man may say, "I am in Christ", and "It is no longer I that live but Christ that liveth in me; and that life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God" (Galatians 2:20). This kind of faith is more than simple intellectual credence. It is indeed a voluntary assent to Christ, but is not that highest assent whose expression is loyal and loving obedience. It is so different in degree as to be practically different in kind from the faith which is the evidence of a Christian believer's "union with Christ". It is not evangelical faith.

A second though inadequate conception of faith is that given in Hebrews 11:1. "Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen". This is often supposed to be in the nature of an exact definition. In reality it describes but one aspect of faith. The remainder of the chapter, in which is the muster-roll of heroes of the Kingdom of God, shows just what characteristic of faith was in the writer's mind when he wrote this so-called definition. These heroes were in the midst of great difficulties. They met almost insurmountable obstacles. They suffered continual contumely and obloquy. They were robbed of their earthly possessions. They were hunted, persecuted, and despoiled of the things which minister to the outward comfort of life. In their constant distresses and deprivations, they saw by faith "things" which should be their own possessions where "there was none to molest or make afraid", and other things which had no material form, and hence could not be seen as could the things here and now. Their faith grasped and embraced these things which God held in reserve for them after life's weary struggle was over. So vivid was this faith, that these things seemed to them already in their

possession, although they were only "hoped for" and "not seen" as yet. "For they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own" (Heb. 11:14).

Now it is true that faith may grasp things, seen or unseen, but that is only one characteristic of it, and by no means describes its true nature. It is a superficial description and was never meant to define the essential nature of faith. In so far as the writer intended to cover one phase of faith, it covers it adequately, but it is not an adequate definition for the whole of it. Hence, when people often express the hope or expectation of a heavenly home, the enjoyment of heavenly things, the possession of heavenly estates, and other supernal equipments, and fancy that their faith grasps these so certainly as to furnish reasonable ground for obtaining them, they labor under an utter misconception of what true faith is, both in its nature and in its objects. Many modern Christians have their whole foreground of faith filled with "things hoped for" which are better than what they now possess; things which will give them greater comforts than they now enjoy; things which will change poverty into wealth, and want into affluence; things which will stay by them without being looked after;—in a word, faith has for its object "things hoped for". Now this is a wholly inadequate description of faith.

The same writer gives a far clearer and more essential description of faith when he says, "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible" (Heb. 11:27). This is a clear recognition of the personal element in faith, which unites heart to heart, soul to soul, person to person. Moses laid hold on God, and rested in Him, with whole confidence that God would take care of things, and would provide for him both in the matter of his safety from the wrath of the king, and also in the providential guiding of his steps. God was the source of his strength to endure, and the object of his faith. This statement, therefore, uncovers and discloses what I conceive to be the primal and essential principle in faith.

The word faith (*pistis*) does not occur in the Gospel of John, and occurs but once in his Epistles. "And this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4). The word occurs frequently in every other book of the New Testament, except in the writings of John. It has its most numerous use in the Epistles of Paul, who writes it almost one hundred and fifty times, exclusive of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The word faith must certainly have been a very familiar everyday word on the lips of the early Christian disciples, if we may judge by this frequent use of it in the New Testament writings. Hence its entire absence from the writings of John, with the single exception, must require a careful explanation based on an analysis of the psychology of the religious experience.

The one time when he uses it would seem to be a case where his pen slipped into the use of the word which was so familiar to all about him, but which was not his own habitual and deliberate mode of conceiving that relation of the soul to God in Christ which is called faith. I am the more



persuaded of this explanation because he proceeds instantly, in the very next sentence (v. 5), to emphasize his own usual idea of the nature and action of faith. "And who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" In other words, John does not view faith as an abstract thing, or as a definable entity. But while he does not use the word faith (*pistis*) excepting the one time, he does use the verb to believe (*pisteuo*) more than a hundred times. Hence it would appear that his conception of faith holds in it that subtle shade of difference which exists between a noun and its cognate verb. He thinks of it always in the spirit and mould which are characteristic of a verb. The noun faith is abstract and definitional of an entity. The verb "to believe" has in it action, movement, life, and especially in view of its supreme object. It is impossible to imagine John, with his modes of thought, writing such a statement of faith as that in Heb. 11:1. It is wholly foreign both to his experience and to his point of view. His thought lies in the other hemisphere. He does not look into the soul of man to find and analyze faith. He looks first at Jesus Christ, whom he sees luminous, gracious, redeeming, almighty, and then secondly at the soul leaping forth to embrace Him and appropriate Him. Hence it seems to me that John's conception of faith is more closely allied to life, action, vital union, than it is even to the intellectual perception of the truth, however clear.

It is easy to place the ictus on either of these two sides of faith. The perceptive side, with all its clear vision of Christ and the glorious power and passion of His person, may seem the most important side; or the side of impulse and life, which spring forth in fruitful currents from the knowing of Christ, may seem the most emphatic to the man who is in closest relations with his fellow man. I am unable to accept the statement of Professor William Sanday, of Oxford, although I have the profoundest respect for his scholarly opinions, when he says, "Compared with St. Paul's conception, we may say that faith with St. John is rather contemplative and philosophic, where with St. Paul it is active and enthusiastic" (Sanday, on Romans, p. 32). This seems to me an interesting and curious illustration of the method of criticism on subjective grounds. We form a preconception of a man's mode of life or of his personal characteristics, and then compel the interpretation or description of all his thinking or acting to lie in that mould.

We forget that man is almost infinitely diversified in his ways of mental approach to a subject as well as in his mental moods. He will, indeed, have his usual method of thought, but it will be broken in upon again and again, and the unusual will usurp its place. John was a meditative and philosophically inclined man, but that does not preclude his thought from being cast in forms of intense action. He conceives activity, however, from the side of the inward sources and states rather than from the side of outward deeds, and especially does he conceive faith from the view point of its object, Jesus Christ, rather than from the view point of faith as a possession of the soul.

Leaving, then, for the time Paul's conception of faith, I should say

that John's conception was not at all what Professor Sanday suggests, but rather the exact opposite. It is active, moving, living, and puts its emphasis on the life side of faith, or in other words, faith is the activity of a soul which is steadfastly putting itself in harmony with God. The one impression which the writings of John make upon me is that faith is the expression of a life at work in all holy ways, and that faith in Jesus Christ is a holy living with Christ as both the supreme source and the supreme goal. Paul in his keener analysis more frequently describes faith as "the living bond, the secret point of union between Christ and the individual soul, the *unio mystica*".

But we must scrutinize more carefully the varied uses of the word faith in the New Testament.

(a) It is used to describe the body of Christian doctrine.

"If so be that ye continue in the faith" (Col. 1:23).

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:5).

"The faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

(b) It signifies an act of the soul toward these doctrines. It may be favorable or adverse.

"So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17).

"Thou believest that God is one; thou doest well: the demons also believe, and shudder" (James 2:19).

(c) It signifies a favorable act of the soul toward the promises of God. This is the familiar use in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and especially in connection with the glorious roster of the heroes of the faith in the eleventh chapter.

(d) It signifies an attitude of the soul toward the works of God, as *e. g.*, Miracles. "Though ye believe not Me, believe the works" (John 10:38). "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God" (Heb. 11:3).

(e) It signifies confidence that what is asked in prayer God will grant. "But let him ask in faith nothing doubting" (James 1:6).

"And the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick" (James 5:15). In James, as one might anticipate, the aspect of faith which is outstanding to his thought is the things or works which are brought to pass through it. He sees and defines faith in terms of results which are manifest in the outward life. "Faith apart from works is dead" (James 2:26).

(f) It is an act of the soul in trust or confidence in a person. If we are looking for the primary and essential significance of faith and that which gives it power, it will be found in this last statement which is really basal for all the other uses of the word. Faith is an act of trust or confidence in a person. Christian faith is an act of trust or confidence in Jesus Christ. It is, therefore, intensely personal. It may believe in a doctrine, or prom-

ise, or work, but it believes in these because it trusts the person who is the author or cause of them. "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" said Jesus to the man who was born blind. He answered and said: "And who is He, Lord, that I may believe on Him?" Jesus said unto him: "Thou hast both seen Him and He it is that speaketh with thee". And he said: "Lord, I believe" (John 9:35-38). Seeing, hearing, believing and worshipping are the steps here set forth. This expresses both God's and man's idea of faith. God requires trust in Himself. Man says, who art Thou, Lord, that I may trust Thee. I must see and know before I can believe. John's Gospel is especially emphatic in this personal aspect of faith as a living relation between man and God. Faith is not so much belief in truths, or promises, or gospels as it is primarily and basally trust in Jesus Christ.

This is also the fundamental Pauline conception, that faith is the warm, living, passionate, personal adhesion to Jesus Christ. We are said "to be saved through faith", "to be justified by faith", "to be joined to Christ by faith", "to be preserved by faith", "to overcome through faith", but all these imply a close personal relation to Christ. All these things will become actualities of experience through the power of Christ whom we trust.

We must now attend to a still closer analysis of faith.

(a) An intellectual perception of God is not faith. It may lead to a belief in His reality. "The demons also believe, and shudder" (James 2:19). This perception does not differ essentially from any perception of reality. There is no necessary moral quality in the intellectual perception of God, even though it includes the moral character of God. The soul might perceive His moral excellence and yet be hostile to Him. All that such a perception does is to affirm the reality of God, and this is the necessary preliminary to either faith or hatred toward God.

(b) Faith is both a perception of God as a reality and an acceptance of and willing submission to Him as our rightful sovereign. Faith on the one side is knowledge, and on the other is the hearty moral allegiance of the soul to God. Hence it is not a blind act of the soul. It involves the highest and clearest intelligence. It is a supreme act of both the intellectual and moral reason, plus a holy choice of the heart.

Hence faith is inseparably interwoven with repentance and love in the beginnings of the new life.

(c) It will be asked how does faith on its intellectual side perceive God.

I answer (a) objectively through the Gospels, and (b) subjectively through our natures made in the likeness of God. These are separable in thought for purposes of analysis, but they are not separable in fact. They are mutually corrective and corroborative. Hence faith rests on the highest rationality, on its intellectual side, and on the right exercise of the moral nature, on its moral side. It is right knowledge plus right action based upon it.

"He that believeth hath eternal life" (John 6:47).

"That every one that beholdeth the Son and believeth on Him should have eternal life" (John 6:40).



The Christian man beholds Christ, and beholding believes, and believing is in possession of eternal life. One cannot say that a man has faith in Christ and then obtains eternal life. Faith in Christ and possession of eternal life are coincident in their beginnings. There could not be faith without the possession of eternal life out of which faith springs, and there could not be eternal life without faith as the expression of it. They start together. They abide together. They are parts of one whole. It is as useless to ask if a man could be saved without personal faith in Christ, or if he could exercise faith without being saved, as it is to ask if one half of an apple is not the whole apple. How explicit is John's declaration, "He that believeth hath eternal life" (John 6:47). And he might have said with equal truth, he that hath eternal life believeth.

Faith, then, begins at the point of union between the soul and its Saviour Jesus Christ. The faith life is the beginning of the Christ life in us, and the Christ life in us is the beginning of the faith life. They are at the source of all Christian living, and inasmuch as the Christian life is a work of God, we may say, in a general way, that faith is among the sources of it.

But if I were to define more exactly and discriminatingly my own conception, I should say that it is not faith which is the spring of religious action, but it is the new, regenerate nature, begotten by the Holy Spirit, which is the spring of it. Faith is neither the cause, nor the source, nor the origin of that new nature, and hence is not the spring of religious action or religious fruits. The new nature, the new life, of which faith in Christ is the constant and true expression, is the spring of all holy desire, and of all holy action. In a word, I should make the new nature wrought in us by the Holy Spirit to be the spring of all right action. Faith is the continual affirmation of the soul that it is Christ who is its life, and that it forever embraces and appropriates Him as the very essence of that new life. It is the soul's perpetual acceptance of Christ. It is the soul's perpetual and fixed looking on Christ as its Saviour and Lord, and, on the ground of what it sees in Him, its intelligent and eager union in His life.

Faith, then, is one act in three parts.—1. The intelligent perception of Christ as He is. 2. The flinging of one's self into the current of His life, so that, by our own free choice, hereafter our life flows on in His life and His life in our life. 3. The willing and joyous reception of Christ into our life in order that He may be our justification and our sanctification. It involves an emptying of self, of all self help, and of all self righteousness, and a receptive activity which appropriates Christ to itself. This phase of faith might be called a free and rational passivity of the soul for the receiving of Christ, and for the putting at His disposal all our being, powers, purposes and possessions, so that He may, without hindrance from us, shape and fashion us after "the good pleasure of His will". All this we call trust, or faith. Again I affirm that evangelical faith is intensely personal.

The secondary results are, of course, our confidence or faith that this divine person will do for us what is best, that He will providentially direct

and overrule our lives, that He will provide daily bread, strength, wisdom and grace. But true faith does not fix its attention primarily on bread, or goods, or things, but wholly on Christ.

And now, having defined what faith is, I may say that really it is the new nature which is the spring of true religious action, as it is also the ground from which grow true religious fruits. What part, then, does faith have? This, and this only, as it seems to me, that the soul by its free and voluntary act having perceived and embraced Jesus Christ, now desires to do what will please Him. It seeks to conform itself to His mind and will. It tries to make its plans, purposes and goals coincident with His. It not merely offers a passive submission of itself to Christ, but also at once moves forward, actively and eagerly, into all the Christ activities, the Christ plans for the world, and the supreme Christ goals. It is so completely identified with Christ that it seeks to become itself a Saviour of the world in company with the Christ who is the supreme Saviour.

As in the case of Thomas, first the veil of doubt drops from his eyes and he sees clearly Jesus, his glorious and radiant Lord, and then, in the same instant, he flings, as it were, the arms of his love in a passionate embrace of possession around Him, as he cries aloud, "My Lord and my God". This is faith, eager, passionate, personal. It is John's Gospel only which records this incident. The reason is easy to find. It is coincident with John's own conception of faith. He is always lying on Jesus' bosom, looking up into Jesus' face, hearing Jesus' words, watching Jesus' works, seeing the infinite reach of Jesus' love, conscious of the almightiness of Jesus' care, feeling the evercleansing flow of Jesus' blood, and possessing an ever present and vivid sense of Jesus' presence.

In the perpetual knowledge and realization of all this, he is at the same time, on his part, voluntarily and eagerly joining himself, in an act perpetually renewed, to Jesus Christ as his only Lord and Saviour. This is John's idea of faith, "the faith which overcometh the world".

## \* JESUS THE BREAD OF LIFE.

(ST. JOHN 6:30-59.)

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"I am the bread of life". The analogues of Jesus were based upon things most familiar to the minds of the peasantry of Palestine. By them He articulated spiritual truths with human apprehensions. The staple food of the daily life was bread. Accessorial luxuries might be unknown, but bread was a necessity. Jesus likens Himself to this familiar diet, found in every home. "I am the bread of life \* \* \* if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever". It seems so artless that the running racer may read it. Its meaning lies so near the surface that the illiterate may interpret it. And yet many that heard it from the lips of Jesus stumbled at the saying. They gathered about Him in the hope of being fed with bread from His wonder-working hands. He directs their minds from the physical to the spiritual bread. Their interest is aroused, their desires quickened. Their apprehensions grow clear and cloudy. Their emotions flow and ebb like the tides. To their hardened hearts and opaque minds the simple utterance became an hard saying. To them the bread became indigestible stone—"who can receive it?" A great defection took place among them, and "many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him". Even the twelve must have been perplexed and tempted to join the secession.

This revolutionary discourse upon "the bread of life" was the issue of a wonder-work wrought by Jesus on the yesterday. It was the passover season. All Israel should have been feasting; but many were distressed with hunger. Five little barley cakes and two small fishes—what were these among the multitude? Multiplied by the yearning sympathy and compassion of Jesus, they increase sufficiently to satisfy all, with a bulk of fragments left greater than the capital with which He began. The people saw in this a sign, but alas for them, it pointed in the wrong direction. He met them on the plane of their temporal need. They are content to abide there and would proclaim Him king if He will continue with them. Their spirit differed nothing from the Roman plebeian throng who cried "Ave Cæsar", so long as they had the gratuity of corn to eat. A Jewish Cæsar to fight their battles and supply their temporal wants is all they ask. They would take Him by force and make Him king—a bread king.

The wonder-works of Jesus were not wrought to encourage them to believe that His power might be harnessed to the temporal life with all its

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\* Delivered at the Third Conference, held at the Beneficent Congregational Church, December 9, 1903.



burden, strain and necessity. He had not come to ameliorate temporal conditions and make the life that now is, comfortable, easy and satisfying. His mission in life was not to supplement the daily waste of the mortal life, but to bring humanity into the inheritance of incorruptible life. Therefore He denies Himself to mere social reform. He was the visitant who came from above, testifying of the things which He had heard and seen. He came from God—an ambassador to speak the word of God. He was the light of life, the spirit of life, the witness of life, the way of life. He would not be a bread king. He would be the bread of life, the life eternal. All His wonder-works were signs hung out amid things seen, to be advertisements of spiritual things unseen. They were index fingers pointing to a life beyond the temporal horizon. They were echoes from a higher realm; embroideries on the veil of nature, behind which dwelt the mysterious presence and power of God. They were designed to arrest attention and arouse interest. They were the *terminus a quo* by which souls might get on the bridge of faith, and pass into the life which is life indeed. Such was the design of the feeding of the multitude. When the people came the next day, their very coming was latent with the cry, "Give us bread to eat". His answer to this cry was to turn their minds from the advertisement to the thing advertised. The bread which they had eaten in such abundance was a sign of the bread which nourishes the life eternal, that bread which satisfies the deepest appetite in the human soul—a heart-hunger for God.

"I am the bread of life". By the introduction of this analogy, Jesus tells us that physiology has its companion law in the spiritual world. The two run parallel. Every observance in the natural and seen should read us lessons concerning the spiritual and unseen. By means of Christ's analogues we have the power of changing the focus of our vision. Instead of looking at the things seen, we use them as a lense through which we behold the unseen and eternal.

The zones of theology and biology lie next to one another. Not only do they touch, but the line of demarcation which has hitherto indicated their boundaries is becoming fainter. We begin to suspect that they are upper and lower sides of one truth. Both theology and biology affirm specialization in the several forms of life with which they have to do. They employ different terms to designate the vital principle that lies behind the specialization of life-forms. But the several principles, if not the terms, are synonymous.

Election is a theological term. Coming from the higher world, it seems to wear the form of divine arbitrariness. Some minds have conceived the doctrine of election as the only foundation upon which to build an assurance of the hope of eternal life. Others have repudiated it as a caricature of the method of God. Men have fought both for and against it. Wesley scorned the very thought of this doctrine, saying to Whitfield, "Your god is my devil". On the other hand, Froude, speaking from the historian's standpoint, not the theologian's, says: "If Calvinism is indeed the hard and unreasonable creed which modern enlightenment declares it to be, why has

it possessed such singular attractions in times past for some of the greatest men that ever lived: if it be a creed of intellectual servitude, why was it able to inspire and sustain the bravest efforts ever made by man to break the yoke of unjust authority?" We may have a duty to brush away the dust of misconception that has accrued upon this doctrine. But the term stands for a great vital principle, and is justified in remaining in the nomenclature of the science of spiritual biology.

Biology employs another term—selection. This term comes from a lower plane, plumed with the prestige of modern scholarship. But it has only augmented the theological term by the prefix of a consonant. Natural selection and spiritual election are synonymous terms in the study of lower and higher biology. They both stand for forces that crystallize in specialized forms of life. Biology predicates structural changes. Features once prominent disappear, and potentialities once latent are prominently developed. By such structural modification life survived the changes of environment and moved toward more complex and higher forms of existence. Theology predicates that flesh and blood cannot enter the Kingdom of God. Changes are coming. The natural cannot abide. That is first which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. The natural is the seed-plot for the spiritual. By spiritual birth and spiritual growth we lose the features of carnality and develop the potentialities of spirituality. Ultimately God must be all and in all. God is a spirit, and they who would survive must become one with Him in spirit. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. This survival is on the principle termed election. The election of theology is the selection of biology carried up to the highest known zone of specialized life. Natural selection is the whole creation groaning and travelling in pain, with outstretched neck straining to greet the time when life shall emerge from the bondage of corruption. Spiritual election is the spirit of God brooding over the human soul, seeking to bring forth a life in the spirit and likeness of the Son of God. Theology and biology stand and behold the Christ of God. If man is the end of biology, then behold the man in whom the fulness of God dwells. If God is the end of theology, then behold God manifested in the flesh. The one must be satisfied that His life is the light of men, while the other follows Him as the Lamb of God who leadeth into the pastures and beside the waters of the life everlasting. Thou wilt show me the path of life. Both will join in saying, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness".

The central theme in the Gospel of John is that specialized life known as eternal life and manifested in Jesus Christ. Eternal is the term describing its quality, and, therefore, becomes one of the cardinal words of this Gospel. Of this life certain predicates are affirmed. Its source and centre is God. Its manifestation and channel is in Jesus Christ. Its inheritance is through the process of a spiritual birth. Its environment is the spirit of Christ. Its nature, type, law, purpose, and glory are all seen in the incarnate, crucified, and risen Son of God. In the passage under consideration we are taught concerning the meat upon which this eternal life must depend for nurture and growth.

Every form of organic life is supported by something external to itself. Every peculiar type of life has its appointed supply whereby to maintain its existence and development. Man has a threefold life. On the lowest plane he has a material body, in common with animals. On the highest plane he has a spirit, in the similitude of God. On the mediate plane he has a rational soul, the nexus between spirit and body. The body is fed with chemical nutriment; the mind with thought; the spirit with God. Each may be imposed upon by deleterious supplies. The physical prodigal may leave the father's table with its wholesome bread, and feed on the pods from the swinetrout of gross sensual indulgence. The soul may leave the banquet of truth and snuff up the fever-breeding air of pride, envy, covetousness, authority, and vain glory. The spirit may be denied the vital tonic of holy meditation upon God. But when each several phase of life receives its appointed meat in due season, the tendency is toward health, comfort, and satisfaction.

But meat suited for one life cannot be substituted for another. When the rich farmer sought to feed his soul on the corn that overflowed his barns he became a fool and died. If the modern Christian Scientist (falsely so-called) were to try the trick of feeding that figment of the imagination, the body, on thought, his obituary would soon be written under the caption, "Thou fool, this day shall thy body be required of thee". Likewise the spiritual life, the life eternal, cannot be supported except it feed upon God, the Lord, the Spirit.

The Old Testament saints experienced this heart-craving. Out of the Psalms there comes to us the cry, "My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is. \* \* \* As the heart panteth and brayeth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God". Nor did they cry in vain. They praised the Lord, saying, "He hath set a table before me in the presence of the enemy. \* \* \* Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. \* \* \* I have treasured up the words of His mouth more than my necessary food". Throughout the olden days God spake unto the fathers in the prophets. Their faith fed upon God through every medium of revelation—prophecy and providence, sacrifice and sacrament were tables where the spirits of just men fed upon God. But He hath in these last days spoken to us in a Son. In Him the abstractions of spiritual truth, which satisfied the heart hunger of former days, are made concrete. He is the bread of life whereof if a man eat he shall be satisfied.

There is a fourfold statement here concerning the bread of life. Each statement supplies some additional detail to the former, and each one is made emphatic by a double amen. The first statement advertises the existence of the meat which abideth unto life eternal. The second statement brings it to view, saying, "I am the bread of life". The third statement informs us that this bread is His flesh which He will give for the life of the world. The last statement emphasizes the necessity of our assimilating Christ by the eating of this bread.



I. Work not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat which abideth unto eternal life. There is a certain work necessary for the obtainment of our daily bread. But this labor may fall into a false emphasis. It may become burdened with undue anxiety and be made the pivot of carnal care. Against this fretting anxiety Jesus specially warns us. Yet if the daily bread came easily, man would be continually beset with the temptation to spend his best energies in self-indulgence, and rest satisfied with the carnal pleasures of his temporal life. Therefore the necessary work is not an accident but a divine appointment. Responsibility calls up the latent good in human life. Necessity sets to work the functions of brain and heart. Manual labor is the outward scaffolding; within is the structure of soul and spirit. Hence the daily meal represents a greater value than can be computed into dollars and cents. There is an undefined plus there. To this higher self man owes his chief duty. All other responsibilities focus there. Its hunger cannot be satisfied with the labor of hands or the genius of mind. It must have a spiritual meat, which meat is given us by the Son of man. Our Father's provision for spiritual life is in Christ Jesus. Him hath he sealed; and the only labor on our part to obtain Him is a spiritual work—the work of faith. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent".

II. Christ is this bread of life. First He quickens the spiritual life and then maintains it. Bread is a very significant analogue. The loaf that comes upon our table is the sacrifice of the summer harvest. The grain grows in the summer's glory, drinking in sunshine and shower. It moves like waves of the sea under the blow of the August breezes. Then the hour of sacrifice comes. The harvester's scythe cuts it down and cradles it. The thresher's flail smites it again and again. Then it is ground many times in the mills to become the finest of wheat. Kneaded and baked it comes at last to us in the form of bread. Simple as it seems there is in it nutriment to supply the fuel of life. It repairs the waste of bone, muscle and nerve; it supplies the energy that works in heart, brain and all organs. The body needs many building materials—oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon, iron, lime, soda, phosphorus, chondrin, osmazome, cholesterine, and resin. What a perplexing multiplicity! But they are all in the bread that supports physical life. "I am the bread of life". The meat of our spiritual nature is concrete in His personality. In Him is life. His life becomes the sacrificial bread of the soul. Equal with God in the eternal glory He becomes incarnate, emptying Himself of that native majesty. A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, He is threshed on the floor of human sorrow and woe. On the cross He is ground in the mills of God's mystery. Risen from the dead and exalted to be a prince and Saviour, He is the bread of life. How many characteristics are necessary to make our character godlike? We do not know. There must be love, humility, submission, patience, hope, gentleness, joy, and all the qualities that entered to compose the character of the Son of God. In Him all our need is supplied according to His riches in glory. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. In Him dwelleth the fulness of the godhead bodily. And of His fulness have we all received

and grace for grace. As we partake of Him, the soul gets out of Him the redemption of the daily waste and the increment of the energy of the life of God. We may not explain how it takes place, but we know from experience, that as we meditate upon the beauty and perfection of the character of our Lord, and as we pray that we may be transformed into His likeness, somehow our spiritual nature takes in the Christ spirit, and all the attributes of His character transfigure themselves through our lives and conduct.

III. "I am the living bread, and the bread which I will give is My flesh". That is to say, the bread which He gives us is life, for He came to minister and to give His life a ransom for many. But it is His life manifested in the flesh,—His life as we have it from the incarnation to the rending of the veil of His flesh on the cross. Mere literalism of interpretation is a snare here. In missing the figurative factor, Nicodemus asked: "How can these things be". The Samaritan woman asked: "How He could give water having nothing to draw with". The Jews asked: "How can He give us His flesh to eat". To them it would suggest cannibalism. Here is one of the cardinal errors of the Romish mass. They literalize this scripture in the doctrine of the actual presence. If it were true, it would avail nothing. Physically, the chemical properties composing the body of Jesus were no different from those that make up our own. It needed the supply of food to supply the daily waste, and increase it to the stature of manhood. It succumbed to the mortal injuries inflicted on the cross. To eat thereof would no more beget eternal life than could the heavenly manna confer a life immortal.

Verse sixty-three supplies the interpreting factor. "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken unto you, they are spirit and they are life". Literally a word is but a sound in the air or a combination of letters made with ink upon paper. The ear may hear the one or the eye see the other, and both remain meaningless. It requires a discerning spirit to read the meaning of words. Christ Jesus was the word of God written in the character of the flesh. He could be seen and heard and yet misunderstood. The Pharisees saw His works and heard His words and said "He hath a devil". The disciples witnessed the same life and works and said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God". How did they know? Jesus said: "Blessed art thou, flesh and blood (not even the flesh and blood of Jesus) hath not revealed it to thee but My Father in heaven". Yet the revelation was through the word made flesh. They had the spiritual discernment to understand the meaning in the word. Physicians often write prescriptions for tonics to our systems. In so doing the bulk of the dose taken has no medicinal value. The stimulating ingredients are written in drams and grains. The balance is written in ounces. The latter are not designed to play an active part. They are the vehicle which carry the other ingredients that could not be taken without it. The flesh of the Son of God is the vehicle by which the life of God comes to us, and in whom we may receive it.

There are eternal idealities and realities in God that constitute life.

Christ is the embodiment of these. By His incarnation and all its sequences these became articulated to our conception and reception. He is the vernacular of God speaking the life of God to our souls.

Christ is the radiance of the glory of the invisible God. He is the sunbeam who brings us the God of light. The sunbeam seems a very simple affair, a single thread of yellow light. A triangular piece of common glass will serve to unwind this thread and reveal the prismatic colors. A perfect spectroscope serves to show us not seven rays in the sunbeam, but innumerable rays, each having a distinct property, contributing to the life of the world. The flesh of Jesus is a spiritual spectroscope. It is a simple matter to say "God is love". But not until that love is unwound through the incarnation and crucifixion of the Christ of God do we really know what it is. In that love is the will of God, the patience of God, the holiness of God, the justice of God, the power of God, etc., etc. So when we feed on the love of God, made over to us in the gift of His Son we have "The living bread which cometh down out of heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die". "This is my body which is broken for you". It is the corn of wheat which falls into the ground and dies, that its life may be made bread for us. It is the rending of the veil that the mysterious presence and fulness of God may be opened to us. It is the breaking of the alabaster box, that the ointment of life may flow out and the fragrance of divine love fill the universe. The incarnation is the embodiment of God's will. The crucifixion is the overflow of His love. To feed on God's will is meat indeed, and to drink of His love at the cross is drink indeed.

IV. "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me and I in him". Spiritual assimilation is necessary. The life of Jesus is an illustration. "As the living Father sent Me and I live because of the Father". The wisdom and power of Jesus were perplexing problems to His adversaries. Whence hath this man this wisdom and these mighty works? They looked to the schools, but His name was not on the matriculation list. They knew the carpenter shop, but no fountain of power sprang there. "I live by the Father"; here He discovers to us the secret. "The Father loveth the Son". That was the table at which He fed daily. If we would know whence Jesus had that poise of life in which blended peace, patience, compassion, joy and hope, He fed on the love of God. "The Father showeth Him all things that He Himself doeth". The Father was the secret of His power. He could from Himself do nothing. He studied the will of God and acted in the obedience of faith. He said: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work". That will was made complete on the cross. "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life". Here then was the secret of His life and work. "I am come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me, and this is the will of Him that sent Me, that all that which He hath given Me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day". By meditation and obedience He assimilated the love and will of God. Even so must we live toward Him as He did toward God.



This analogue of "Christ the bread of life", is suggestive in many directions. Irregularity in the daily fellowship and appropriations can not obtain the best experiences and results. Special diet may be necessary by meditation on specific attributes in the life of Jesus, for the reproduction of the same characteristics in our own lives. Failure to expend the vitality gained by meditation will clog and dry in the soul as a like process obtains in the body. Unassimilated truth will cause distress akin to dyspepsia. Many cannot bear the meat diet at all and must be fed on milk, and malted milk at that. But to the soul that has the conscientious desire to grow in spirit, there is ample provision in Christ the bread. To believe on Him is initial faith. To receive Him is appropriating faith. To understand Him is intelligent faith. To assimilate Him is active faith. Like all life, the spiritual life is known by the food that it requires, and the process of replacement and transformed energy results in transfigured character bearing the likeness of the Son of God.

\* THE CONFESSION OF PETER—CHRIST THE WORLD'S ONLY HOPE  
AND LIFE.

(ST. JOHN 6:68, 69.)

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"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life". I count on your forgiveness, if, in order to come to this verse along the right line I seem to repeat what may have been said in the course of the day; but it is impossible to enter properly into any great verse of this wonderful book unless you carry into it the light of a very large context.

There are some human sayings that have "Greatness thrust upon them", and have become independent of their context in order to be made great. Take for example our national motto, "E Pluribus Unum", which was a part of a receipt for making salad. There is a word that had to break away from its context and history to have greatness thrust upon it. Again, you have another humorous illustration in that saying from Terence, "Nothing that is human reckon I to be foreign to myself". If you ever carry that into its context, I doubt if you will ever use it again. You will find it was spoken by a Paul Pry who was speaking through a keyhole and who sought to justify himself by speaking that ringing phrase.

But other words are born great, and such words must be taken with their climate. It is impossible to find one's way along the right path into any one of these deep words without carrying a large context with you. I said in a preceding address that this book was all center. The problem of its authorship is an exceedingly difficult one. I for my part believe that the only possible explanation of the primary text of the Gospel is that it was written, as the tradition says, by John the Apostle in his old age.

Let us call to one's aid what we know about the action of the human memory in old age. We all know how memory behaves. If any of us are getting towards fifty or some distance beyond, we know by personal experience; more and more the intermediate state of the years from thirty or thirty-four drops out, and as we go into ripening years, the events of youth become contemporary. I can remember with more precision things which happened when I was twelve years old than when I was thirty-two; and I expect to have that process go on, and if I live to be seventy, I expect to be contemporary with "my little brother", as Stephenson called the boy he once was.

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\* Delivered at the Third Conference, held at the Benevolent Congregational Church, December 9, 1903.

We must add to this trait of memory, in connection with the authorship of this book, the fact that John had no artificial memory. Our memory is for the most part a memory of libraries; but his was a natural one, it was in his head. That is where he carried all his history. One knows how a man who has had the help of no book to pin him down to accurate quotations, and to precise scientific memories, when he comes to look back out of his old age at the life of a great friend, will write the life of that friend. All the accidental things will have dropped out, and only the heart of the story will be left. And therefore the peculiarity of this Fourth Gospel is that it is all center. There is nothing in it but the person of Christ.

The striking literary illustration of this is the fact that in the Fourth Gospel you find no parables; that is, no parables which strictly speaking can be called parables. You have in the tenth chapter the so-called allegory of the Good Shepherd, and in the fifteenth something which approaches the parable, but they can not be called that in any exact sense. The parable has disappeared in John's Gospel. And the reason is, that in the Synoptics they are in connection with the doctrine of the Kingdom, but in the Fourth Gospel the doctrine of the Kingdom has been swallowed up in the person and presence of the King.

Again, to carry this thought one step further, John looks back at the life of his friend through His death. Herein he is like Paul, but herein he is also unlike Paul. For while it is untrue to say that Paul cared nothing for the Christ of Galilee and Palestine, it is quite true to say that he did not see deep into His life back of the cross. It is entirely true to say that because Paul's memory was not stocked with the living words of the Lord Jesus, and because his mind was not filled with the results of an intimate personal acquaintance with Jesus Christ, the background of Christ's life, as Paul sees it, is relatively narrow. But in the Fourth Gospel there is a great background of the Christ of history standing behind the Christ of the cross. The Fourth Gospel is all center. The center is the cross. But the eye sees deep into the life back of the cross.

So the larger context which we must carry into this verse is this structure of the Gospel. Then there are two details of the author's program which must be added to this. The first is that in the Synoptics there is no clear distinction between the church and the crowd. In the Fourth Gospel the church is distinct from the crowd from the very first day. The little company of personal believers who have been called by Jesus and blessed by His intimacy, and through that have been taught to understand Him,—they are distinct and separate from the mass at the outset, and remain so to the end.

The other element which must be carried into the context is our author's conception of the Messianic mob. There is such a thing as a religious mob, you know. And the religious mob is one of the elements in our author's conception of our Lord's life. This religious mob, or Messianic mob, is like the chorus in the Greek play. The chorus in the Greek drama has no backbone of its own; it is constantly taking its color from the last



speaker, if he speaks forcibly enough. Thus in any play of Sophocles you can always tell by the color of the chorus what has been the theme of the last great speaker. Even so in John's Gospel the mass of half-believers is constantly taking color now from Jesus, and now from His opponents, the Jews. Moving now backwards, now forwards, they, in distinction from the disciples, are what Luther called "milk disciples". They cannot digest strong food. They cannot stand upon their own feet. The true believer is the one who knew Jesus before He worked any miracle, and therefore sees the miracles through the personality of Jesus Christ. But the other type of believer insists upon seeing Jesus through the miracles, that is, upon seeing the Master from the outside.

And now, coming to the more immediate context let us look at chapter six of which our verse is a part. Chapter six, speaking in a figure, is the watershed of the Gospel. It records the supreme crisis in the Master's life. On the far side, beginning with the prologue, we trace in it the climax in the story of our Saviour's popular success. On the nearer side of it, looking toward the passion and crucifixion, lies the increasing difficulty of His position, the deepening doubt and unbelief which issued on the cross.

You remember the contents of the chapter. Jesus had not thought it best to go up personally to the Passover. So He must needs keep the Passover in His own way and He keeps it in the wilderness. He plays the part of God's host out there in the wilderness, and His guests are a great miscellaneous crowd of pilgrims who are on the way to the Passover. The result of Jesus' wonderful miracle, that of the loaves and fishes, was that the Messianic ambition of the crowd straightway sprang to life: as John tells us, they undertook to force Jesus' hand and to make Him a King. They were not real disciples. They were masters in disguise. Just as you and I constantly in our life with Christ and God play the part of master and try to force our ambitions upon God and tell Him in effect that we will turn Atheists, if He does not let us have our own way. So with these half-believers.

This Messianic mob tries, in the enthusiasm created by our Lord's great miracle, to force Jesus' hand and to make Him a King. And there for the moment, humanly speaking, the gulf opened at His feet. Humanly speaking, He came within an inch of spoiling God's plans. If He had yielded, what would have happened? Galilee was a very small province of a very small country. Jesus was in sight of Tiberius when He worked the miracle, and if He had yielded a single inch to the ambitions of that Messianic mob, there would have been a rebellion, an attempt at a popular uprising. So the Master saw a great gulf yawn at His feet and you must carry that fact in mind in order to understand this sixth chapter; for straightway Jesus puts the faith of these half-believers to the test.

First, He draws Himself aloof from them and goes off into the mountain alone. On the morrow the crowd seeks Him and finds Him. He puts them to the test. He makes faith hard. That is the way He sometimes treats us. Christ and God in Him are constantly making faith hard. And why should

faith not be hard? Why should faith be easy? If faith were easy, it would soon become cheap and not worth the while of earnest men and women. But God makes faith hard in order to test the believer. And Christ here deliberately made faith hard. And the way He does it, you will remember, is to exalt His own personality. He will not come down to their level, they must come up to His. He exalts His own personality and challenges those believers to believe in Him, not because of His miracle, but because of His person.

But they balk and will not believe on those terms. And you will remember that every time they advance a difficulty, Jesus, instead of making faith easier makes it even harder, until at last He uses the symbolical expressions of the bread of life, and declares that unless they eat His flesh and drink His blood they cannot be saved.

Thereupon the crowd said: "This is a hard saying". The Greek there does not mean that Jesus' saying was one which was unintelligible. They thought they understood it perfectly. And that was the whole trouble. Oftentimes in the crisis of our own faith the real trouble is that we think we know. We have got it in our heads, the thing is perfectly intelligible, only we cannot live up to it. So the crowd did not say "This is a hard saying", because they did not understand it. If they had said that, they would have stopped to listen. For when you know a thing is not intelligible to you and there is something inside of it, you stop and listen. But the crowd was very sure they knew what it meant, and when they said "A hard saying", they meant this is a bad saying, utterly impossible. No orthodox Jewish churchman can entertain it. And so they turned their backs upon Him and went off to their old way of life.

Now Jesus turns to His disciples and says, with pain in His heart, "Will ye also go away?" Then comes the answer of the church, speaking through Simon Peter: "Master, to whom shall we go, it is Thou, and Thou only who hast the words of eternal life". *The words of eternal life*,—that is to say, in the first instance, words which bring with them irresistible conviction. The great mass of words do not, just because there is such a mass of them. The newspaper brings no conviction, it never is meant to. The average novel which we read is a kind of intellectual opiate when we are tired. Ninety-nine hundredths of what we call our conversation carries no conviction, for nowhere in it is a word that has wings, a word that breathes and burns. But sometimes there are words that bring irresistible conviction, words that come from the heart and life of the speaker and go straight to the heart of the hearer. And Peter, representing the living church in all days, says to the Saviour: "Thou hast the words of eternal life". He means in the first instance words which bring irresistible conviction and certitude.

"*The words of eternal life*". When we have taken that phrase, which is one of the constantly repeated phrases of this Gospel, and have studied it long enough, the substantive swallows up the adjective. The word life is enough. There was a time when I was a boy, and then mere life was eternal life. When I was a freshman in college, mere life for me was eternal life.

I do not believe any freshman, unless he is exceedingly mature when he enters, is ever conscious of a lack of time. He has all the time there is and a good deal more. Time seems to appear absolutely limitless to the boy just entering college. But what happened as we grew up? If we are earnest there appears a disproportion between time and work. As years come on and responsibilities are assumed and life is seen and understood in all its vastness, the disproportion becomes almost terrible.

Then the tragedy of life begins. Life threatens to become a slow fever. You remember Macbeth's words about the man he has murdered, "After life's fitful fever he sleeps well". The great trouble in growing up is that life becomes a fever. What one of us has not the fever of life in his veins? What one of us does not, nearly every day, fall out of eternity into time, and spoil our day's work by being anxious and worried about it, allowing the thing we call time to put its jagged teeth into it and sometimes gnaw the very heart out of it. And how are we to do a real day's work? Only by living in eternity. The true Christian does live day by day in eternity. Whenever a man really prays he passes out of time into eternity. The reason why prayer is the Christian's fountain of youth is that it remakes and refreshes him. For, when we pray, we go into eternity and return out of prayer into time, refreshed and recreated.

Peter, speaking in the name of the living church, which I venture to define as that body of men and women who have learned how to pray and therefore have learned how to work,—Peter, speaking in the name of the living church, says to the Master, "Thou hast the secret of eternal life; Thou alone canst impart to men the art of doing the full day's work while time lasts in the spirit and presence of the Eternal". And why? Because Jesus is the revelation of a personal God. What do we mean by personality? Well, that is a very deep question. Perhaps I ought not to have asked it, for, when a question is asked, you must try to answer it. But I could not help it. The simple truth is that what we call real thinking consists in asking almost impossible questions and doing our best with the answer. What, then, do we mean by the personality of God? What do you mean by your own personality? For, unless you have some conception of your own personality you are using a mere phrase, entering a mist of words when you talk about the personality of God. What, then, do you mean by calling yourself a person?

We have not gone far into the mystery of personality. We have just begun to spell it out in words of one syllable. That is all. But, so far as we know anything about the personality, it means three things, or rather three aspects of one thing. First of all, it means self-knowledge. The difference between a person and the man or woman who is not a person is the difference between people who do not know and those who do know themselves. That splendid Greek motto put upon the temple at Delphi, "Know thyself" is the maxim of every spirit. And here again let me quote Shakespeare to illuminate the subject. You remember how, in *King Lear*, Goneril says about her father, after the awful tragedy has begun, "He did but



slenderly know himself". It seems to me that is one of the neglected hints in the study of Lear. There, almost under his breath, the great dramatist himself gives us the clew to the tragedy. It grew out of King Lear's slender knowledge of himself. And all of the real tragedies of life grow out of our imperfect knowledge of ourselves. To know one's self is the first thing personality means. And when we speak about God we mean that God alone knows Himself.

Secondly, personality means self-mastery. Find a true man or woman and you find beings who shape and plan their own lives. Find men and women who are not persons, and you shall find jelly fish, and they are as thick, sometimes, as jelly fish in any particular part of the Bay of Fundy. I have leaned over my boat, sometimes, and counted jelly fish, it seemed to me, up to ten thousand to a hundred square feet of water. Sometimes, when one sees crowds of people driven towards barren conclusions and barren actions, one is tempted to think that he sees a great mass of jelly fish who are driven with the tide. When you find persons, you find people who plan their lives and then live them according to a plan. Now, when we speak of the personality of God, we mean that He is complete master of Himself.

Thirdly, when we speak of personality, this is our meaning. Find a great human person, and you shall find someone who has the art of revealing himself in everything that he does. I have known just one great man in my life, Phillips Brooks. And he is the only great man I expect to meet on this side of the grave. Phillips Brooks, because he was great, had the art of revealing the greatness of his nature in mere trivialities. And just in proportion as we become personal and live the personal life, have we the gift and art of imparting our entire self to those who touch us and those who know us. Is not this the blessed mystery of friendship? What do we mean by friendship, whether it be that of husband and wife, or of man and man, or of woman and woman? We mean just this. Where you find friends you find persons, and where you find persons you find people capable of revealing themselves to each other so completely that trivial things cease to be. There is no trifle in friendship. You outgrow trifles when you become friends. Friendship is the life of persons walking together in the light of the eternal.

This is what we aim at when we apply the term to God. He alone absolutely knows Himself. He alone absolutely masters Himself. He alone has in Himself the perfect art of self-revelation. Touch God and you touch the whole of Him. There are no fractions in a person. There are no fractions in God. But where shall we go to find God as a person? Where? except to Christ. Henry Ward Beecher once said that when he said "God", without thinking of Christ, there went up in his mind a vague mental mist. That is just what happens to us when we say "God" without thinking of Christ. There rises in our minds a vague mental mist, a mere spiritual exhalation. When we want to see God as a person we go to Christ, and through Him,—the absolutely perfect man, who is at the same time abso-

lutely the Son of the Father,—God, or the personal life is revealed to us. Seeing Christ, we see God. Touching Christ we have the revelation of God's personal life. When we ally ourselves to the personality of God we ourselves become in principle and in potency persons. And only through our alliance with the personality of God, as revealed and incarnated in Christ, can we become in the fullest sense of the word persons and do a person's work.

The alternative to the incarnation, the alternative to belief in Christ as the final revelation of a personal God is Pantheism. The parable of Pantheism cannot be better expressed than in the parable of the sick lion. The lion became an invalid, you remember, and since he could not go out to get his game he anticipated modern fashions and had a five o'clock tea. He sent out invitations to all his subjects to come and see him. But the fox refused to go. When the fox was asked why, he said that he had noticed that all the tracks went one way, that the animals who went to that royal five o'clock tea apparently never came back. This is the parable of Pantheism. In Pantheism we have no foothold for human individuality. In order to make yourself one with the eternal substance of things you allow that substance of things to swallow you up. These words are in point:

"Like bubbles on the sea of matter born,  
We rise, we break, and to that sea return".

God is a spiritual sea. We rise out of it as the bubble rises, and, like the bubble, we break.

But in the Christian doctrine of the incarnation there is firm ground for an ethical conception of personality, and nowhere else. So we, who in our imperfect measure are members of the living church, that church which is made up in all ages of the men and women who have learned to pray, and because they have learned this have learned how to live in eternity and to do their day's work with none of the fever of time in their veins, we say to the Lord Jesus what Peter said in our name centuries ago, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life". We are shut up to Christ. And why? I heard this morning of a man who discussed theology with one of our theological students while he was tinkering his teeth. One comes upon theology in very queer places, sometimes. This discussion happened in a dentist's shop. The dentist said to the theological student, "My god is electricity". Well, that looks like a very clever thing. It depends a good deal upon his manners. If he said it in a crude, sophomoric way, all you can do is to wait until you and he can meet somewhere. You cannot meet the mind of a man who says sophomorically, "My god is electricity". To use Cardinal Newman's fine expression, "You might just as well try to get up a duel between a dog and a fish". To argue is to waste one's time. You must wait for other opportunities before you try to defend the work of Christ to such a man. But suppose he says it reverently? Suppose he means that electricity is the latest revelation of the universe, and so is the symbol of its majesty and mystery.

What do you say to him? If you know your Christ you wont dream of

burning him at the stake, and when you refuse to listen to a heretic you are in principle burning him at the stake. If you are allowed by history to get your hands on the reins of power you would resume the habit of burning him in order to get him out of existence. But suppose we have outgrown that habit, and have the patience to listen to the heretic, what shall we say to him who reverently says that electricity is his god? Something like this, "Your words are all very well as far as they go". But how far do they go? What is the day's work of a man? to mend broken human teeth? Is it to pick out a little corner of the earth and know it well? As Voltaire said, "To cultivate his little garden"? We have all kinds of avocations, but the vocation of us all is to be deep-minded men and women, doing the entire task of men and women. But what is the whole task of men and women? Why, as we spell it here, it is to take your city of Providence and make it look a little bit like the New Jerusalem. To take New York, or any other place and make it look a bit like the heavenly city. And how are you going to do it? If you take this and nothing less to be your vocation, and the mending of teeth to be your avocation, a mere method of meeting economic expenses while you give your whole heart to your real business in life, where shall you go to build your strength?

Where shall you get the power to do that day's work? It is comparatively easy to tinker teeth and do it well. It is comparatively easy to study this or that branch of history or science, and do it tolerably well. But to tackle this great day's work of making your Providence or my Boston, or somebody's New York really look like God's heavenly and holy city, that calls for a different sort of god. Electricity will not serve. Unless we are to take the ostrich for our patron saint and try to solve difficulties by hiding our heads in the sand, there is just one way to take. We desire to stand up to our great task like men, never faltering, never faint-hearted, but being for the faint-hearted like that splendid figure in the second part of "Pilgrim's Progress", Captain Great-Heart. Where shall the Captain Great-Heart, standing for the redemption of society, find the secret of his great-heartedness? There is only one place where men who are seeking to do this great work can find it, and that is in the revelation of a personal God, who, through His friendship, promises to them all His power and mind and goodness and might. We are shut up to Christ because He is the one perfect revelation of a personal God, and because we would fain do a man's whole work before we die. And so we say to Him, as Peter said to Him in our name, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life".



## \* JESUS' CONTROVERSIES WITH THE JEWS.

(SEE CHAPTERS 7-10.)

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To understand Jesus' controversies with the Jews we must understand the Jews with whom the controversies were held, and to understand the Jews we must read their history from the time they returned from their exile to re-occupy the Holy Land.

That history divides itself into three periods: The Persian period, extending from 538 to 332, B. C.; the Greek period, from 332 to 167, B. C., and the Maccabean period, from 167 to 63, B. C., when Syria became a Roman province.

Of the Persian period, little is known in detail. In general, the condition of the people was sad. The rule was oppressive, especially towards the close of the period, so that Alexander and his armies were hailed as divine deliverers. In the Greek period the condition at first was favorable, but towards the close it degenerated, reaching its climax of oppression and corruption in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, against whose reckless desecration of the temple and brutal imposition of infamous laws there arose the famous revolt of the Maccabees.

Now, this revolt was in its essence a religious rebellion, crystalizing itself in a party of national opposition to foreign rule; but as the revolt proceeded, the national party developed in the direction of political self-seeking, making its aim and passion official power rather than religious rights. As a consequence, the old religious element in the party separated itself into a party of its own, a party whose opposition was more against the national party, which had become political, than against the foreign rule itself.

As this religious party, however, began to develop more zeal for religion than for the nation, there separated from it still another party, a party of revolutionary fanaticism, whose opposition was thrown against both the other parties, while, as this national party in its political self-seeking came to throw itself in favor of the foreign rule it had first opposed, there arose another party of like political cast, but of no religious element, gathering around the reigning family in Palestine, and having for its object the re-establishment of the Herodian kingdom in the spirit of its traditional policy, namely, the union of Judaism and Hellenism. This was a party

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whose opposition was against all the three parties as far as they were religious, but whose favor was extended toward them all as far as they were political.

There is no need of my naming these parties I have described. They are named in their description. The party seeking political gain was the party of the Sadducees, the party which represented in itself one of the two great tendencies present in the nation after its return from the exile—the tendency to mingle with the heathen world, a tendency characteristic of the priestly aristocracy among the Jews. The religiously separating party was the party of the Pharisees, the party which represented in itself the other great tendency present after the exile—the tendency to keep aloof from heathendom and preserve the traditional religion pure, a tendency characteristic of the people of the Jews. The fanatical party was the party of the Zealots, the party which believed in the sword to save the cause, a party reckless in its zeal but strangely sincere in its recklessness, a party to which Ben Hur might have belonged, a party which had a representative in the apostolic circle. The dynastic party was the party of the Herodians, a party which gathered around the political leadership that professed to be religious, but whose union of religion and culture reduced religion to a hollow farce and culture to a mimicry, and left nothing real but politics.

Now, if these parties could have been kept apart, there might have confronted Jesus a clear cut line between politics and religion. But how was it possible for them to be kept apart? With the Jew, religion was a part of his national life, and national life was a part of his religion. No more really so was it in Scotland in the time of the Covenanters, or in Holland in the time of the Spanish rule, than it was in Judea in the time of Herod and Pontius Pilate. As a matter of fact, much as the Pharisees disavowed politics, and the Sadducees disavowed devotion to the Mosaic law, the national fortunes of the Jews drew these two parties into alliances and then again into oppositions that brought religion and politics into an inextricable tangle in the nation's life, while the Herodians professed such religion as they had for purely political ends, and the Zealots practiced such politics as they dared with a purely religious spirit.

To be sure, in all this tangle of the secular and the religious, there was, as there always is, an element among the people who kept religion pure. You see it in such persons as Simeon and Anna, in the Baptist and his disciples, and the family and kins-folk from which the Baptist and Jesus Himself came. You see it also in a distinctive group of religionists, who were not a party, or even a sect, but rather a brotherhood who came from the same pious stock as the Pharisees, but, unlike them in their yielding to politics, separated themselves even from the ordinary life of men—the Essenes, who represented in themselves a deep underlying tendency always present in the popular Jewish mind, a tendency to thoughtfulness on religious things.

These were the Jews with whom Jesus had to deal. This was the atmosphere in which His ministry was cast. Was it possible, then, for con-

troversy not to rise? Bring before this politico-religious party life the spiritual mission of Jesus, confront the conceptions of character which it created with the spiritual personality, the divinely spiritual self of Jesus, and what must have happened? The Sadducees would oppose it all, because Jesus' teachings were based on piety and not on culture, while Jesus Himself involved a divine revelation and not an agnostic skepticism. The Pharisees would resent it all, because Jesus and His teachings laid the hand on legalistic ceremony and swept it away. The Zealots would not understand it, because Jesus did not reveal Himself along the line of fire and sword. The Herodians would have nothing to do with it, because Jesus had nothing to do with the artificiality of their ideas and the politics of their aims. Even the Essenes, who might be supposed to be religiously and spiritually nearest to it, would turn against it, because Jesus would not turn against the everyday life and experience of men. And so it came that, though these parties hated each other, time and again combinations among them threw their forces against Jesus and His work. There was Jesus' healing of the withered hand on the Sabbath day. What cared the Herodians for the Sabbath law and custom? Yet they plotted with the Pharisees against His life. There was the demand for a sign from heaven. What belief had the Sadducees in heaven or a sign from there? Yet they united with the Pharisees in demanding it. There was the open claim of His Messiahship which Jesus placed before the people's leaders in the holy week, and instinctively Pharisee, Sadducee, and Herodians tried to break it down. It was the one great fact of a spiritual movement in the midst of them, the one great fact of a supremely spiritual personality among them, the one great fact of an absolutely spiritual claim before them that broke in upon the dream of their political ideals, that smote the indifference of their materialism, that crushed the self-conceit of their ceremonialism, and brought them all to realize that if the Galilean won His way their day of power and life was gone.

Now take all this and see the light it throws upon the Fourth Gospel. There is a great difference between the Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John, and the greatness of that difference lies at the point of Jesus' discourses. In the Synoptists they are parables of fields and flowers, of home and business life, plain and simple talks on the common themes of every day. In the Gospel of John they are deep and profound discourses on themes transcending human experience, but the striking thing about these transcendental themes is that they gather around the one subject of Jesus Himself and His relation to God and the unseen universe.

Why this marked difference between this Fourth Gospel and the rest? Is it that the Synoptists alone give us the story of Jesus' ministry, the Fourth Gospel coming from some later writer who knew more of Greek philosophy than he did of Jesus' teaching? Could the same Jesus not give both kinds of teaching? Turn over the Gospel pages, and you will see that significantly the Synoptic talks were given, almost all of them, in the early part of Jesus' ministry to the peasant folk of Galilee, the simple-minded people to whom these simple talks brought apprehension of God's spiritual



truth, while the Fourth Gospel discourses were given, almost all of them, in the later part of Jesus' ministry to the ecclesiastical Jews of Jerusalem, the speculative, controversial, the politically scheming Jews, whose one objection to Jesus was that He claimed to have a spiritual truth from God to declare.

You see then what this gathering of the Fourth Gospel themes around the person and self of Jesus means. It is not the poetizing of a philosophic writer who knew naught of Jesus or His truth. These discourses are Jesus' teaching. They are the teaching of the same Jesus who speaks to us in the Sermon on the Mount and the parables by the sea, only now He is confronting the Jews' materialism, their political, self-seeking, nationalizing materialism, with the great claims of the spiritualism of a God who must be worshipped in spirit and truth, and who could be seen and known only in the spiritual Lordship of Jesus Himself over personal character and life. It was the controversy which came naturally at the close of Jesus' ministry, as the opposition to Him by the religious leaders came to its inevitable issue, and Jesus' claims against it came to their inevitable declaration in the full.

Now, go through the scenes the Fourth Gospel gives us, and see how all this works itself out.

1. There is Jesus in Jerusalem at the Pool of Bethesda. The impotent man is lying on the threshold of supposed healing, with no one to help him across. Jesus comes and says to him, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk", and immediately the man was made whole, took up his bed and walked; and the same day was the Sabbath. Ah, there was the trouble! The scribes and Pharisees are quick to the scent. They stop the man: "It is the Sabbath Day, knowest thou not?" Everyone in Jerusalem knew that, if he knew nothing else. "It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed". Everyone knew that, too. "But He that made me whole, the same said unto me, 'Take up thy bed and walk'". "Who made thee whole?" "I know not". But He must be brought to know, for the issue between the Pharisees and Jesus must be straightway drawn. So Jesus came and disclosed Himself to him, in order that he might tell the Pharisees. And he told them, and immediately they began to persecute Jesus and to seek to slay Him, because He laid His hand upon the burdened ritualism of the Sabbath Day to break it down. But why draw the issue? Why not leave the Pharisees to the idea of their Sabbath Day? Simply because the Pharisees must come to know that the Sabbath finds itself in no lordship over man, but only in such a service to him as is possible by the lordship over it of Jesus Christ. The Sabbath must be saved from the materialism of the scribes. The spiritual Christ must be put in authority and power over it.

2. There is Jesus in Jerusalem again. It is the Feast of Dedication. The people are in a great quandary about Him. Some say that He is a good man; others say He deceives the people. Some say that He is the Christ; others, that He has a devil. Murmuring and division among the people because they could not understand how He could heal diseases, cure infirmities, cast out demons, raise the dead, show all the wonder marks of the

Messiah and yet not reveal Himself to the world, the world of the nation's politics, the world of the nation's policy against Rome. Into all this confusion Jesus steps, and on that last great day of the Feast, when the sending of the great procession with its symbolic water of Messianic refreshing testified to the people's confession that the Messiah had not yet come, the Messiah they looked for, on that great day He stands, and over against all this bald materialism of religion lifts up Himself in full announcement of His spiritual self and person. "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink".

O, the clearness of the issue! The people of God confessing no Messiah had come, and the Messiah in their midst! O, the pathos of the situation! The raging thirst for national power and life, and no thought of quenching it anywhere save at the dried up wells of politics and culture, and the living water there at their hand! The helpless groping after a light, that groping in the darkness of the world around them, and no thought of finding it apart from the *ignis fatuus* of ritualism and revolution, and the light of life shining before their eyes! The constant problem of their relationship to God, and no idea of solving it save only through a hold upon the history of the past; the promises, the covenant, the fathers, Abraham, everything back to that, and there among them He Who is before Abraham was! The ever present irritation of their dispersion in the world, the ever sounding cry for a realizing of the covenant fold and the covenant care, for God's presence with its mastering power, and no conception of how to secure this all, save through the materialism of life, and there pleading with them the One Who was the door of the sheep; the Good Shepherd, Who was ready to give unto them eternal life, and from Whose hand nothing would ever pluck them away!

And the days pass on while the shadows of Calvary gather. The Jews do not see them; the disciples do not perceive them; no one is conscious of them save Him Who had known of them all along and Whose soul was troubled through them and exalted by them as no human soul could be. "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit". The hour was come that the Son of Man should be glorified. The judgment of the Jews against the Christ was fast approaching, but it should be a judgment of the Christ against the Jews. "Now is the judgment of this world. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out, and I"—oh, how the whole thing gathers up in the Christ Himself!—"and I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all men unto Me". And the people could comprehend naught of it, save to say, "How sayest Thou, the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?"

Is it any wonder that as the shadows came they fell with greater darkness on the Jews than they did on the Christ? A few months before, Jesus had said to them: "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; he that believeth on Me shall never thirst". And now they were dragging Him up before Pilate, and crying, "A malefactor! Crucify Him". Truly "The light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness apprehended it not". To Pilate Jesus might say: "I came into the world that

I might bear witness to the truth", and Pilate reply, "What is truth?" and put the truth upon the cross and let it die, and it signified but little to him, a pagan mind of pagan training. What else might we expect? But that throughout His ministry Jesus should have held Himself up before the people of God and declared Himself to them as the truth, and they cry out against Him as the lie! O Christ, how deep the gulf between Thy spiritual self and the materialism of the world!

And they led Him away, and the soldiers crucified Him, and Pilate wrote over His head "The King of the Jews", and the Jews mocked and railed at Him: "If Thou be the King of the Jews, come down from the cross and we will believe Thee". And as the darkness fell upon them and the quaking earth rocked beneath their feet, they smote upon their breasts and returned to their homes and said: "The light of this imposter has gone out". Yes, so it had, but only that it might burst forth again in resurrection splendor. Yet they saw it not, for the darkness of their souls remained within them; and when the risen Christ was proclaimed the Saviour of the world they killed the men who preached Him as they had killed the Christ Himself, because ever stands the darkness of the world against the light of God, ever blind to it and so ever ignorant of it, ever unreceptive toward it and so ever hateful of it, till we come to realize that truth of truths—"This alone is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent".



## \* UNBELIEF THE FUNDAMENTAL SIN.

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The profoundest text book in the world on Psychology is one that is seldom used, either by teacher or by pupil. The greatest master of the human mind is the last quoted in class room or laboratory. That text book is the New Testament, and that master is Christ. We toss upon seas of distraction, blown hither and thither by winds of uncertainty and reach no haven, because we can not get or keep our course. We talk learnedly and ineffectively of doubt and illusion and hallucination and bootless quest of truth, because the very conditions of truth are wanting in us. We travel according to the rules of logic, and reach, not a conclusion, but a new and still more unmanageable term in a syllogism. We search the cold heights of intellect by the colder light of reason, and find, not a soul but a phantom. We call upon God and are answered by the echo of our own cry. We build a fool's paradise and trip its ways lightly in the dance of death, and wonder why life is not greater and more beautiful. And when we seek escape from our prison-house of folly, we follow ways that lead everywhere except to freedom. We shut our eyes to evil and take the road of blind optimism that runs swiftly to the land of disillusionment. We shut our eyes to good and take the road of blinder pessimism that runs more swiftly still to the abyss of despair. We shut our eyes to fact altogether, and take the road of skepticism that begins in one darkness and ends in another. The way of self-knowledge and self-surrender we do not take, and Christ says that that is the only way that leads to freedom. Thus our problem remains unsettled and life has no rest, because in our search for truth we pass truth by unrecognized.

None the less the search for truth goes on. And this is well. For man's first duty in a world of reality is to face the facts. Whatever the theoretical difficulties of a philosophy of knowledge, the every-day man assumes that the facts that concern his life are worth knowing and that they can be known. Knowledge is relative, no doubt. We know things only as they affect us. But as long as the only condition on which a rational universe can be known at all is the condition that it shall keep faith with itself in all its parts, the values that we find written in the equations of life must have some kind of consistency throughout the system. That which the world is to me it must be in its measure to every being like me, under like conditions, wherever found. And for beings conceivably unlike me and for conditions different from mine, the world must have its meaning, the values still pro-

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portional, and, so far as the other life and mine have common bonds, convertible. The truth which to me is matter of slow reasoning may be to another matter of intuition. But for me and for that other the truth is not two truths but one.

This is only saying that the universe will keep faith with us as it keeps faith with itself. Limitations will still hedge us about, and futility attend much of our effort, but up to the very edge of our power the whole universe is ours, and what we can compass we may keep. Faith is the first great note of human sanity, faith in the honesty of the universe and faith in one's own honesty in dealing with the universe.

Now faith is only one of an exceedingly rich group of words expressing a disposition toward fair dealing. Belief, confidence, conviction, assurance, trust,—we could multiply the list many times without exhausting the terms properly belonging in it. And in them all we find the same dominant note. It is the note of harmony, and constantly assures us that the universe and we belong together. That which I see and hear and touch I cannot doubt and live. And when the facts are certified to me, not by the warrant of my own senses but by the senses of another, just as far as I have confidence in that other I accept his experience as valid within the limits where it may properly apply. And when it is no sense at all, my own or another's, but an experience that has no traceable connection with the senses, that brings me the fact which concerns me next, if the fact is duly certified I shall not doubt it. Now the data of our mental and spiritual life though mediated by sense are not sensible, for when I have them they are facts of consciousness, and only more or less elaborate processes of reasoning tell us that it is through the senses that certain of those facts of consciousness arise. Those processes sufficiently repeated and suitably extended give us our world. The thing we can never doubt and never be rid of is the fact of consciousness. What is there is there. And being there it must be explained and accounted for. To explain and account for part of these facts, we assume a material world. To explain and account for another part we assume a spiritual world. To get the whole implication of these worlds we are summoned to still further explanation and accounting, and so our universe or complete world comes to view.

Conscious life, therefore, is a life of faith. I find certain facts within me which I cannot doubt if I would. Interrogate them I may, nay *must*. Doubt them I neither do nor can. And by a prodigious act of faith I pass from that world of consciousness to a world of which I know nothing except as the key to its understanding is within me, and the only warrant for whose existence at all, so far as I can see, is my need of it. This applies equally to the world of matter and to the world of spirit. In other words, *the universe itself is built by faith*.

Of course this does not mean that the universe is only a creation of the mind. It means that I proceed to the knowledge of the universe by faith. *My* universe is created by faith. But this creation is creation only as a process of personal experience. So far as the universe itself is concerned

my creation is a finding. It is there and I get to know it. But I am sure of it and I can have dealings with it on the basis of faith and faith alone.

How shall we define this process or act of faith? By what words can we make clear to ourselves what we mean when we say we believe? I believe a thing when I accept it as real. Faith, then, may be defined as the feeling of reality. It is the assent, not of the mind only but also of the heart and will, whatever there is in the soul that grips. There are many specific outgoings of faith, as there are many forms of reality. There is physical reality. So sense perception has its corresponding feeling of reality. There is intellectual reality. So the reasoned conclusion will have its corresponding feeling of reality. There is esthetic reality. So the esthetic deliverance will have its corresponding feeling of reality. There is moral reality. So determinations of good and evil will have their corresponding feeling of reality. There is a distinctively spiritual world. So the deeper judgments of the soul will have their corresponding feeling of reality. But the feeling is in essence one. It is just the soul saying, "This I find to be true". The thing is there and I have dealings with it.

One caution should be noted. As a purely subjective experience what I find so is so. But my finding a thing so does not make the thing really so in the world that transcends purely personal experience. Sometimes things get into the mind that get nowhere else. We are obliged, therefore, more or less constantly to test the contents of our mind, to make sure that the reality we think we hold is real. Illusion, delusion, hallucination, dream, to say nothing of the thousand shapes the unsound brain will conjure into being,—these words stand for subjective reality that has no corresponding reality in the external world. Part of the business of every waking hour is to make sure that our faiths represent actual relations between ourselves and the universe. The faith with which we are concerned to-day is always and everywhere the living consent of the soul to have commerce with reality.

It is hardly necessary, but let us say it, faith needs no justification. We can neither add to its essential character nor take away from it. *It is*. And it is what it is. Like any other fact of experience it has to be taken as it is found. Just as the mind brings with it the power to know and to feel and to will, so it brings with it the power to believe. We cannot analyze it, because it is a simple, ultimate mental fact. We cannot go behind it, because it is at the beginning. Faith is part of the natural equipment of the normal soul.

And we must not forget that unbelief may be as legitimate as belief. The justification of belief is the justification of unbelief no less. This is true whether by unbelief we mean the negation of belief or positive disbelief. Let me be bidden to believe something that takes no hold upon my life. The thing may be true, but it means nothing to me. There may be mountains of gold in the moon. I know nothing about it. To me it is not a living hypothesis. If you ask me to believe it notwithstanding this, I can only tell you that I do not believe. There is no fact in my life upon which such a proposition takes hold. So with disbelief. Let me be assured



that in Providence there are men who habitually ignore the laws of gravity. When they wish to go from one place to another they do not walk or ride; they simply think of going and they are there. You tell me that such men may be found in all parts of the city, on Westminster Street, on Weybosset, on College Hill. What is my problem? I cast about within me for some fact of experience on which this new fact can take hold. I find none. More than that, this proposed fact contradicts every fact of my experience, so that my entire life is a protest against its acceptance. What shall I do? Nothing. Yet that is not quite what I shall do. I shall do nothing, but I shall decide that the man who requires such faith of me is deluded, unless I exercise the right of sound reason to set him down as a liar. Believe I cannot. Disbelieve I must.

What the mind does is to assent to what it finds. If its outreach in any direction ends in the discovery of nothing, there is no call upon the soul for faith. Belief is the soul's assent to what it finds to be there. The grounds on which the soul is satisfied are many and of many kinds. I can find an object by my own eyes and ears and hands. I can find it by the eyes and ears and hands of another. I can find it without eyes and ears and hands, my own or another's, by signs which eyes and ears and hands can neither take nor interpret. But whenever and however found, reality duly certified by relation to the unquestionable facts of consciousness calls for assent in living terms. The character of the response will bear some ratio in form and value to the reality with which one enters into relation. If I believe that two and two make four, I will make my reckonings accordingly. If I believe that man is mortal, I will make my plans accordingly. If I believe that woolen is fitter material for clothing in winter than silk or cotton, I will dress for the cold in woolen. If I believe that a certain course of business procedure is profitable, I will follow that course. If I believe that it is better to be well than sick, I will seek health. If I believe that it is my duty to think of others rather than of myself, I will think of others before I think of myself. If I believe in God, I will serve and worship Him. What a man assents to and accepts as real, shapes his life. For good or for evil, belief determines conduct. Not what a man calls his belief, but his real belief shapes his life.

The thing that is natural and right for the normal man is what the normal man will do. But in the face of all that is natural and right we find men failing to do what normal life requires. Here is a man to whom reason opens the way of honor and profit, and instead of taking that way the man walks straight to uncleanness and poverty. Here is a man who knows where duty lies, and he turns to the end of the world that lies farthest from duty. Here are arguments that cannot be gainsaid or denied, and yet they fall unheeded. Here is a world that is absolutely essential to the explanation of the world in which men live, and behold men treat it as less than a name. What is the result? Disorder in the whole life in proportion to the violation of the fundamental demand of reason, that belief shall respond to fact duly certified and properly presented. The failures of which we now speak are

so many cases of refusal to keep faith with the universe. This should be impossible. Were it not for the awful power of the human will to shape its own ways it would be impossible. But the naked fact stands, that of several possible courses I myself determine which I shall follow: throwing the weight of desire upon the side of this course as against that, recalling the decision on the point of execution, appealing to conscience or some obligation that just now suddenly is seen to be precious, swaying, shaping, moulding, finally deciding beyond recall the path I shall take. I cannot explain how this is done. I simply find myself doing it, falling or rising by the decision. So, close by the glory of life we find life's shame. In response to the fundamental demand of reason we find a thorough-going violation of the order of the universe. At the very point where faith should be final and complete, we find faith broken or reversed altogether. It is a monstrous thing. For if it is a wrong to the soul to believe without evidence, to believe against evidence is a crime against the universe.

How is this monstrous thing possible? That which should be impossible is not impossible, as a thousand bitter experiences show. I see the better. I see it to be the better. I approve it as the better. I follow the worse. So the unnatural thing is done. But how can we refuse to decide by the evidence? The answer must lie in some kind of mental and moral disorder. One has to bear in mind the fact that there are many forms of reality. There is a world of flesh as well as a world of spirit. The experiences of the flesh are real as truly, if not as permanently, as those of the spirit. And in experience we find many elements which, though not real in valid sense, have the appearance of reality. Error consists in the acceptance of the invalid for the valid. It is possible for such acceptance to be so often repeated that practical reversal of normal conditions of life takes place. Thus what at first looks like mere intellectual and moral revolt turns out to be mental and moral dislocation. Lives helplessly halt and blind and withered go stumbling along the world's highway, some of them crying out for help, some, perhaps most, neither crying nor caring for help.

We are standing face to face with the inscrutable mystery of life set to evil. The fact of such life is only too apparent. The world is full of it, our world and the great world of men. Intemperate men, impure men, dishonest men, deceitful men, cruel men, bad men of every kind live their evil life and find all the happiness they find at all in fleshly courses. And the world lends itself to evil uses apparently with as little reluctance as it does to good. The fact is, that what we call evil and good take on their character as evil and good only when touched and determined by will. The world is the great field in which the dove finds grain and the vulture finds carrion. What one takes to the world determines what one takes from the world. The great question concerns, not grain and carrion, but dove and vulture. At bottom the question of life is a question, not of things but of people. And the set of life toward the worse is what we mean by the evil will. It is the identification of self with the lower, the coarser, the worse elements of the world.

But every mental act does more than bring itself to pass. It sets into effect certain influences in the outer world. It bears certain fruit in the world of the soul. It is with the inner world that we are concerned just now. A choice often repeated becomes the permanent choice. The act often repeated becomes the habit, the settled course of life. So we are constantly making and unmaking ourselves. Suppose that the tendency toward evil that manifests itself in the evil will gets reinforcement from the daily choice. The effect is seen in daily hardening of habit toward a fixed state of evil. So every choice in a given direction makes more inevitable later choice in that direction, till presently no other direction is thought of or desired. How far may this hardening go? Milton puts into the mouth of Satan the awful words, "Evil, be thou my good." In such a case the process goes so far as to reach complete reversal of values.

Is the choice of Satan psychologically possible? A thousand cases of like choice, though perhaps less fixed and less confessed, make answer, yes. Ambition, lust, avarice, jealousy, envy, hate fill the breast with seething passion, till the very life is hell. "Which way I fly is hell, myself am hell". Not simply Satan on his throne says that, but multitudes of men who have no throne, but who do Satan's work and live his life in acknowledged or unacknowledged fellowship with him. The fact is central to life, that evil choice repeated makes further evil choice probable, till no other choice is possible.

And yet, responsibility cannot be disclaimed. If the choice has become inevitable, how can one be held accountable for it? Well may a man say, when caught in the grip of the evil will, "I could not choose otherwise than as I chose in this". Truer confession than that, lips never made. The man could not have chosen otherwise than as he did. But the inevitableness of that choice lay in earlier choices. Back and back and back we press until we reach a point in the man's life where other choice was possible. Then, under the influence of passion or ignorance or unworthy motive, the man turned from the better way. There in the choice of the worse was the beginning of the way whose end is this bondage to evil. And the man cannot disclaim responsibility for the result. For choice is nothing but the soul taking the portion that seems to it good. Will is only the soul set to accomplish the purpose the soul has set for itself. When we do ill we are not thrust into the ill by a fate that compels us so to cast ourselves away. The only fate that can touch a man to make or mar him is himself. What the machinery of the universe does is to weave the choice of the hour into the fabric of life. The doctrine of fate is no myth, but God's truth plainly spoken. Only, man's fate is the fixing of man's choice, the projection of himself upon eternity. For what he is, therefore, at a given hour, the man must hold himself accountable, and himself alone. In that hour he can no longer help being what he is, but what made him what he is in that hour was his own choice, deliberate or indifferent. The web of life is of our own weaving.

The natural history of the evil will helps us to understand why the



requirements of righteousness are so unwelcome to the man who has cast in his lot with unrighteousness. The set of life toward the worse reveals two worlds within the great world. In one world is all that we call good. In the other is all that we call evil. There is a distinct type of life for each of these worlds. By his conformity to one or the other of the two types a man declares his fellowship. Jesus throws this conformity into the striking terms of family fellowship. "I am of My Father God. You are of your father the devil. What I see My Father do I do. What you see your father do you do". And as the family life of God is good, the life of those who share the family fellowship with God will be good. As the family life of the devil is bad, those who share the family fellowship of the devil will be bad. And as there is nothing in common between the two families, the life of each cannot but seem unbeautiful to the other. Jesus says plainly that the opposition He had to meet was due to something other than dislike of Him. It was want of understanding of the things with which His life was filled. And those who did not understand did more than fail to understand: they misunderstood. They could not see what Jesus saw or hear what Jesus heard because their whole life belonged in a different sphere from His. When the sense of the divine has gone out of the life no work will seem divine. For those who do not know God the word of Jesus can have no meaning as the word of God. To those who have shut heaven out of the life the very condition by which a revelation can be understood is wanting. By that test Jesus at once tried and condemned the men of His day. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of Myself". "I speak the things which I have seen with My Father, and ye also do the things which ye have heard with your father. Ye do the works of your father. If God were your father, ye would love Me, for I came forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do ye not understand My speech? Even because ye cannot hear My word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar and the father thereof. But because I say the truth ye believe Me not, because ye are not of God".

The attitude of a given moment is pre-determined. The slow setting of life toward good or toward evil goes into it. One's total belief is engaged in the decision of a given question. My entire relation to party and country and race makes practically certain beforehand what I shall think of the new special political problem. My entire religious experience is involved in the answer to the new religious question, making it possible for any one who knows me thoroughly to feel sure in advance what that answer will be. As soon as one knows the family history of the men to whom Jesus speaks, one may be confident of the response they will make to the divine demand. For they are men whom selfishness has blinded till their understanding is darkened, and their judgment gone utterly astray. The best outline of the

history of human error ever written is in the first chapter of Romans. Men committed the sin of unclear judgment, with the result that succeeding judgment became less and less clear, till complete reversals of value were inevitable, and life took on a new and strange character. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man and of four-footed beasts and creeping things". The mystery of the power of choice remains, and the greater mystery of the use of that power unworthily. What the apostle shows is simply the movement of man's mind in the process of his undoing. Bad grows to worse. "Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness: for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator". Worse grows to worst. "Even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; whisperers, back-biters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful: who, knowing the ordinance of God that they which practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with those who practice them". There is little need of seeking further for an explanation of the judgment that lacks judgment and the life that is death. Mind and heart and will are grouped together. And the awful fact is that this outworking is only an outworking. What men do they do themselves. In this blackest picture ever painted the central fact is man's own choice of evil. God let them go their way. The evil they thought and wrought to their undoing was their own.

To men who have thus chosen, the divine demand is an impossible demand. Self-centered, self-sufficient, self-seeking—what answer can a man make to the demand of self-surrender? For the call of God in Christ Jesus is precisely that. As Professor Flint so well says of Christian faith, "It is a self-surrender, an acceptance of Christ as of God made wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption unto us; a supreme trust in Christ based on a distinctive conviction as to His character and His relationship both to God and man". The attitude of the wilful life toward such a demand is not hard to name. Failure to accept is not so much failure as refusal. The mood of such a life is not defect but defiance. Alienation of mind ends always in hostility of will.

When once the principle of the life is fixed every experience is a confirmation of it. So the world becomes a mighty instrument of good or evil, according to the life it touches. The sun shining upon a healthy tree means life and ever more life. Upon a dead tree the shining means completer death. Rain floods the foliage with fresh greenness. The fallen leaves it turns into a sodden mass. Life and death are not in the sun and rain, but in that on which they fall. It is within ourselves that we shall find

the sentence of life and death. When the spirit fell at Pentecost, to some of the lookers-on the marvel seemed a serious thing and they questioned, saying, "What meaneth this?" To others it was matter of mockery, and they said, "They are full of new wine". So the history of the truth runs in all times and places in them that are being saved and in them that are perishing: to the one the savor from death unto death; to the other the savor of life unto life. The life of God Himself is deeper death to the soul that closes itself against that life.

What is the central principle of the unbelieving life? Its root and bloom and fruit are one. And that one is self. It begins in self. It matures in self—thinking self, feeling self, willing self. It ends in self. The heart of unbelief is selfishness. All else follows as a matter of course, want of sympathy, separation, opposition, revolt, open warfare. What is the use of specifying the multitudinous acts of sin when we have the principle of sin? Why count the branches one by one when the pledge of them all is in the root, and we have the root? Out of the heart proceed the things that defile, and when we have the heart we have all that the heart makes sure. Men reject Christ because they have nothing in common with Him. Their unbelief is simply their unlikeness finding expression in speech and deed.

But why keep citing rejection of Christ, as if that were a special proof of unbelief? Because it is a special proof of unbelief. The spirit and the words and the works of Jesus were divine. They were the spirit and words and works of God. To know Jesus was to know God. Not to see God in the life of Jesus was to show oneself incapable of seeing Him anywhere. Over and over Jesus said, "Believe Me. But if you cannot yet believe Me, look at My works and believe what they say". The works of God can come only from the life of God. The character of the works of Jesus was not doubted, even by those who hated the spirit by which they were wrought. That was the blasphemy which the judgment of God smote back upon the very lips of denial: insistence by men who knew better, that the divine work before their eyes was the work of the devil. But that was only the crowning denial, the full-voiced unbelief that did not shrink even from charging a lie upon the holiness of God. If that is not itself always the unpardonable sin, it is a sin that joins hands with the unpardonable sin.

The rejection of Christ is only less vital. As long as there is possibility of recognizing sin at all, the rejection of Christ will be recognized as sin. The men to whom the Spirit of God brings home conviction of sin find their quickened consciences responding most readily at that very point, as at last they see that all the while God has been looking upon them in the face of Jesus Christ. And though they may have been slow to acknowledge that there is such a thing as sin in the world, when once they realize what Jesus Christ means to the world they must say, "Here at last is something that is unmistakably evil, my denial of the right of Jesus Christ to my life". And in that evil lies the secret of all other evils that reveal in human life alienation from the mind of God and hostility to His will. Unbelief is the fundamental sin, the root from which every specific sin draws its life.



And this is a teaching to take hold of the life of our own day. It belongs not simply to a far-off time and people but to the present and to us. The claims of Jesus Christ are as direct today as ever. The life of God is as real as ever. "And this is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him Whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ".

\*KNOWLEDGE OF THE TEACHING OF JESUS THROUGH THE DOING  
OF THE WILL OF GOD.

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"If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching whether it be of God or whether I speak of Myself". (St. John 7:17—R. V.)

Perhaps the best way of approach to an understanding of this passage is to take the words in their apparently simple and obvious intent. The easy and natural interpretation of the verse would be something as follows: If any man deliberately sets his will toward right doing he will have little difficulty in realizing the essential divineness of the teaching of Jesus. Knowledge arises out of deed. Let a man come to the words of Jesus with a deliberate intention to realize in his activity the highest kind of life, and he will find in the teaching of the Master a satisfaction which will convince him of the truth of the teaching. With continued doing of the Divine Will set forth in the revelation of Jesus there will come an increasingly solid deposit of conviction as to the truth of that revelation. We all know what it is to set the will firmly in devotion to right doing; we all know too what it is to know truth,—to rest in the conviction that the deep satisfaction which a thought brings is a warrant for holding the thought as true. We all know, further, how this satisfaction comes out of experience in the practice of the truth. As the practice of the truth brings increased and deepened satisfaction, we attain to a certainty and immediacy of conviction which nothing can shake. This is what one coming to an interpretation of the text with experience in the search for certainty as to truth in real life would make out of the statement of Jesus. Such a one might put his thought into finer expression, but his conclusion would be substantially that here given.

Jesus enforced as no other has ever done the thought that God is a person of moral quality—of highest and holiest righteousness. This conception is in one form or another probably at the bottom of most doing of the will of God. Let now a man determined to do the will of God hear the teaching of Jesus concerning the character of God. Will he not at once recognize the teaching as the goal for which his soul has been seeking? Suppose that he goes forward in his righteous doing with the teaching of Jesus definitely in mind. Is it not inconceivable that there should be any other result than a deepening conviction as to the truth of what Jesus has taught? Or take the teaching of Jesus as to the essential dignity and worthi-

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\* Delivered at the Fourth Conference, held at Grace Episcopal Church, January 13, 1904.

ness of humanity. Can there be better preparation for the full reception of this truth than the doing of the will of God, and if the life be constantly ordered with the teaching of Jesus as to the eternal worth of the moral will constantly before the mind, is it not inevitable that the soul should come to a settled conviction as to its own eternal value in the moral universe? Will not the doing of the will of God make the attitude of Jesus toward sin seem the one true attitude? Will not the reliance upon Jesus for spiritual life by one who is earnestly seeking to do right bring an assurance deep and steadfast as to the truth of the Master's claim to be a veritable center of life-giving forces? If Christ is taken as king in the realm of right doing, He will prove by the actual results in the increased spiritual power of His followers that He is what He claims to be. The appeal is to life,—the same appeal that we make in the case of any claim,—the appeal to success. Can the claim make itself good? The final test of truth is just the satisfaction we attain as we think the truth. If the mind is at rest as it contemplates a revelation, the revelation is held to be true. Jesus did not come to set forth mere statements of facts; He came to reveal and enforce certain truths. The test of these truths is in the feeling of spiritual satisfaction which they bring. The doing of the will of God,—the taking of Jesus at His word and the practice of His revelation as a matter of moral doing will beget in the heart of the doer the satisfaction which is the real and vital witness.

This would seem to be the meaning of the passage to one who should read it for its clear and plain intent. This natural interpretation must be allowed to stand if there is no good reason for going behind it. Jesus did not make hidden enigmas of statements like this. He spoke the language of real life, and while He loaded His words with a significance which eternity cannot exhaust, He no doubt intended us to start with the simple significance which lies upon the surface.

There are some, however, who might grant a measure of consent to this general statement who would nevertheless insist that it gives not quite the right ground for religious certainty.

First among the objectors might be put those who hold that no inner assurance is necessarily a part of the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. For example, an intelligent friend of mine recently attended an inquirer's service held by a reputable and responsible clergyman in a neighboring city. The issue up for illumination was just this matter of Christian certainty. "How can I know the truth to be the truth" was the question of seeker after seeker. The response was stereotyped: "We know that this is true because the Bible says so". Some of these questions had to do with inner and vital experience. "What ground have we for believing that we are sons of God?" The answer was: "Have you complied with the Biblical conditions so far as you know? If you have, you are His sons simply because the Bible says so. This is not a matter primarily of inner satisfaction. It is a matter of taking the word of God as true, no matter whether there be any mental rest or not". The point is clear. This clergyman did what many others have been doing from the beginning. He found the ground for religious certainty



in the appeal to an external authority. The appeal to the authority settles all. There is no further need of argument.

The truth of this putting all are willing to concede. If a seeker has become almost morbid through introspective search after some mysterious sign, no better advice could be given him than this encouragement to take the word of an external authority. Moreover, for very many, or for all of us during certain stages of experience, there must be this reliance upon authority apart from any response of inner satisfaction. In one form or another the authoritative deliverance by the church, or the parent, or the teacher, or the Book, must play the decisive part in the religious experience of immaturity. All these forms of authoritative utterance get their force, however, from the fact that out of centuries of Christian doing has come a race-wide and heart-deep satisfaction which lends inevitable momentum to the utterance. The Bible is believed not because of its being an external authority settling questions by lawyer-like dogmatism. It is received because centuries of Christian doing have resulted in satisfaction deep and abiding. It rests not upon bodies of evidence of a merely historical and critical kind. If the revelation were merely the utterance of an external authority no one would trouble himself with it long enough to ask about evidences.

Another objector declares that Christian certainty is not to be likened to our feeling of satisfaction as we become convinced of any other truth. He tells us that Christian certainty is a matter altogether apart from any other kind of certainty. If not altogether a miraculous revelation it stands aloof from the ordinary experiences of the mental life. It is a peculiar assurance which we recognize at once as coming from the divine spirit. It is a veritable witness of the Spirit and is not to be confounded with any lower order of knowing whatsoever. If we would know God we must have moments of rapt exaltation when we see things hidden from the foundation of the world.

Here too there is a measure of truth. If it is possible for the soul to be completely transported by its enthusiasm for earthly objects, it is altogether unreasonable not to allow the same transports of enthusiasm for divine objects. If love for a friend or for a country produces mountain-top experiences, from which we learn more than from months of living at the lower levels, it is perfectly possible to have like moments of illumination as to the things of God. But there is nothing essentially miraculous about these experiences. So far as they have value in any case they come out of the solid devotion which manifests itself in doing. If the ecstasy over friend, or country, or God, comes not out of doing the will of country, or friend, or God, it has but little value. Let a man give himself to the real doing of the will of the Father and the firm conviction that he is on the path of life, may, in particular circumstances, rise to bursts of enthusiastic delight. But underneath all this is the rock basis of ethical, spiritual devotion. Out of this the knowledge comes. And whether the knowledge ever rises to the exalted plane or not, there will be for the doer of the will of God steady satisfaction of settled conviction.

Still another objector comes forward. He is evidently much impressed by the strictly scientific character of the day in which we live and tells us that this word of the Master is clearly an appeal to a strictly scientific test. If we wish to know Christian truth let us put it to a test of experiment just as the worker in the laboratory puts his discoveries to the test of experiment.

The objector has evidently overlooked the distinction between matters of truth on the one hand and matters of objective fact on the other. The body of Christ's teaching is not a body of scientific facts. It is a setting forth of truths. Truths are not so much for detailed verification by laboratory experiment as for the proof which comes as they show their wearing qualities in the doubts and stresses which are so frequent in actual life. Yet the truth as it is in Jesus has just as scientific foundation as do those general conceptions which underlie scientific discovery. For these, too, are matters of belief and faith. They are the product of atmosphere and the general conditions which have been thrown around the mind. The work of the experimenter is in large part done before the test is made in the laboratory. It has been done in the shaping of the general conceptions which underlie all scientific procedure. It has been done in the scientific tendency given to the experimenter's mind. On last analysis it would be found that this means that the experimenter has for years been holding certain general conceptions which have been capable of no further proof than the satisfaction which they give to the mind as it conducts its activities. Even the belief in "evolution" which is made so much of in these days rests not so completely upon this or that body of demonstrated fact as upon the general satisfaction which the thought gives the mind. The scientific investigator does not today lay much stress upon apriori methods, but he is an apriorist nevertheless. He may not be an apriorist in the sense that he holds to hard and fast statements of principle which are to guide his discoveries, but the principles are in his thought nevertheless in the shape of certain expectations and tendencies and inner tests of satisfaction which really determine—if not what he shall find—at least the emphasis he shall put upon what he finds.

So then we feel all the more inclined to hold fast the natural reading of the passage of this book of John concerning the knowledge of the truth through doing the will of God. The passage means that as we do the will of God there comes into our minds an increasing and solid deposit of conviction that we are upon the side of the truth in holding what Christ has brought us. The conviction may be that indefinable something which we ordinarily have in mind when we use the word about any matter of belief, or it may rise at times into something more definite, even the transport of an overwhelming enthusiasm. But in any case we have the heart of the truth when we say that Jesus meant just this, that out of Christian doing there comes increasing assurance as to the truth which Jesus taught. While we would not care to bring the teaching to the test of this or that particular experiment we are willing to say that if by experiment is meant the general

conduct of the life, we claim for Christian truth that it can be submitted to experiment as truly as can any other truth. In the satisfaction which follows the making of the truth taught by Jesus the rule of the life we have the inner conviction which assures of the truth of the teaching.

But we meet still some further objection. The contender for the real and vital communion between the soul and God feels that somehow we have handed this entire matter of assurance over to the natural as distinguished from the supernatural. Instead of the direct witness of God's spirit with ours we have now only the same kind of assurance which follows grasp upon any kind of truth. The trouble with our explanation is that it seems altogether too easy.

To discuss this point with thoroughness would carry us over into metaphysics. We may say, however, that what has been set forth above is said with the conviction that in God we live and move and have our being; that the powers which we call natural are just as truly His as those we call supernatural or miraculous; that He is in all the things of this universe except sin; that the worst kind of atheism is that which looks to find God only in the startling and unusual rather than in the orderly, every day processes which are so common; that the assurance which we have as to the truth, even if it seems like assurance as to any other kind of truth, is produced by the immediate contact of God, even though he be acting in a way which we call altogether natural.

It is high time for the church to get rid of the deism which has haunted her for so long. The modern preaching of the doctrine of "Divine Immanence", crude as much of it is, is helping us to realize the presence of God in the world of external nature. It is time for the church to take the further step and insist more earnestly that God is not only in orderly physical movements, but in orderly psychological movement as well. Mental realm as well as material realm should be looked upon as the abode of His law. There is only one way that I can be convinced of the Truth, and this is by taking it as the guide of my life and seeing if the satisfaction of assurance follows.

But another makes the objection that if God is the immediate inspiring agent back of all truth how are we to decide between truths of differing degrees of importance. We have been taught that the Truth as it is in Jesus is the supreme truth, but if all truth comes to us as the inspiration of God, is not all truth on a level?

There is really very little need of disturbance at this point. The doing of the will of God is supposed to make the will of God the supreme consideration. If we wish to know whether the knowledge of the truth of Jesus is the supreme truth there is only one test. Put it in the supreme place and see if the soul finds supreme satisfaction. God indeed tells us all things that are really true. All good gifts come from Him. There is nothing in this thought, however, that should put all the gifts on a dead level of importance. The belief is to be judged by the satisfaction which follows taking it as a rule of life. If we wish to get the true perspective on the importance



of God's gifts let the perspective be the perspective of Jesus. The appeal is always to life.

But does this conception provide against error? Is it not possible for a man to be woefully mistaken? Can he not go on year after year thinking that he is doing God's will and becoming all the more convinced that his error is the truth? This is of course possible, but it is possible on any system. The believer in a miraculous witness of the spirit is just as likely to be mistaken as the holder of the view here set forth. All that we can say is that we ought to have something of the confidence in a right outcome that possessed the Master. He was not unaware of the mistakes that men might make, and yet he seemed perfectly sure of his final triumph. There is a great deal of the merely abstract about this scruple. The difficulty is not great in real life. If a central African chorus should attempt to prove to us that their atrocious discords are superior to the music of Handel's Messiah, we should concede the saving sincerity of the African's belief, but should hold fast to our own thought nevertheless. We should even think ourselves warranted in holding fast, no matter how great the body of proof the heathen singers might bring forth. The satisfaction that comes from doing the will of God includes the belief that in the end the truth will prevail.

But now our scientific friend of a few moments ago returns with the protest that all this is desperately unscientific. The foundations of the faith must be deeper laid than in the consciousness of satisfied assurance in the minds of the disciples. We have to respond to him as we did before, that there is just as much basis for the belief in Christian truth as there is for belief in scientific truth. Science must have assumptions which rest only on the satisfaction which they give the inner life. That splendid system of law, according to which all things are controlled to the very center is an assumption. If the physicist declares that he takes nothing into the laboratory with him, we make speedy response that he takes this far-reaching assumption with him. And he takes it simply because it satisfies his inner needs. He will not be satisfied with thought of an arbitrary and irrational chaos of truant and fugitive facts. He will set aside experiment after experiment in the hope to vindicate this settled assumption. Or take the thought of the uniformity of nature. This assumption also stands largely because of the satisfaction it gives our mental needs. Underneath all laboratory research is the invisible, unproved basis which is really the guiding factor in the scientist's work. If the scientist points to the body of actual result which follows his assumption, so can we point to the body of actual result which follows our taking the doing of the will of God to be our guide toward the truth.

We conclude this part of the discussion as we began, by saying that Jesus rested His system upon the consciousness which would come to men's minds as they acted upon the truth He proclaimed. The Gospels do not stand simply because they have been uttered by divine man. They stand because men longing to be divine have become convinced of their truth in

actual doing. If they ceased to satisfy when taken as the actual guide for men determined to do the will of God, nothing could keep them in the thought of the world. They would have value only to the antiquarian or to the historian. "If any man willeth to do the will of God he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God or whether I speak of Myself". The revelation which comes in Jesus is the very top and crown of all of God's manifestations of Himself. The final witness to the truth of that revelation is the feeling of satisfaction which it begets in submissive hearts.

After having dwelt thus on the meaning of the text, perhaps a word as to some phases of the usability of the principle here set forth may be in order. The principle provides first of all for a basis of suitable modesty of Christian claim as to knowledge. We are to be unflinchingly certain of the truths which come to us as convictions begotten by religious doing. Some things will be and should be gripped with increasing tenacity as life goes on, but some other things ought to be held lightly and contemplated from the standpoint of a genuine Christian agnosticism. Truths which come to us as the result of doing the will of God belong to the first class, while conjectures which do not harden into conviction as the product and accompaniment of the will's faithful activity may well be put in a second and inferior class.

For example, Jesus taught us of immortality. The man who goes forth to live as if immortality were actually reachable finds himself coming to ineradicable assurance as to his own essential deathlessness. There are, however, some items of the future life which we all guess at but which are not forced into conviction out of Christian doing. The details of the heavenly existence, the manner of "body" the soul shall have, the precise character of the tasks that are to be ours, the final disposition of the wicked,—matters like these do not come within the reach of the illumination of Christian doing. If there are, on the other hand, implications which follow by a sort of spiritual necessity from the underlying trust in immortality there is no reason why we should not hold them fast. If, for instance, earthly friendships are lifted to the exalted spiritual realm where they are eternally worth while, there is every ground for the trust that nothing in the final shock can touch them. But let us always remember that declarations as to hidden things which do not base themselves on convictions rising out of the doing of God's will should be put forward merely as conjectures.

Again, consider the bearing of the Master's principle on some of the profoundest speculations in Christian philosophy. The underlying basis in this philosophy is a body of conviction produced in us by obedience to God. We believe in the God Whom Jesus revealed because the assumption of that God's existence as a working belief in our lives convinces us that He is and that He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Active acceptance of Jesus Christ as the Son of God leads to the completest acquiescence in His claims. Moreover, we can go further. On the basis of our certainty as to the ethical life of God we can reach out into some legitimate speculations as to the inmost life of God. We put these speculations

to the same test as the more primary beliefs and if we find satisfaction in them we hold them as true until we get something better. This is, of course, mere philosophical commonplace, but it would be well if we stated more often and more clearly just the ground on which many of our beliefs rest. We need no better basis than this,—that the belief is forced upon us by the doing of the will of God.

For illustration, look at the doctrine of the Trinity. What is the secret of its persistence through the centuries in spite of all the intellectual scruples urged against it? Just this,—that we are forced to the belief in one form or another through the strength of our conviction as to the ethical character of God. We wish to make adequate provision for that ethical life, and as ethical life calls for worthy objects on which to expend itself, we say that the Father finds such objects in Son and Spirit. We even go further and give the Son and Spirit personal life that there may be the social requisites of highest ethical experience. The point upon which I now insist is that the effective demand comes from the necessity, which we feel as we do God's will, for some real basis for ethical fulness in the source of all moral and spiritual doing. Of course we may profess to rest our belief on some other foundation stones, but their masonry will not bear close scrutiny. We may say that God must have an object equal to Himself in the very nature of the mind's activity,—that an infinite subject is an absurdity without an infinite object. But if God were not a moral being, the mere psychological demand for an object could be satisfied without having the object worthy and without making it personal. God might be a supreme Egotist glorying in unsocial and loveless loneliness; or He might grovel in an endless succession of infinitely trivial, or infinitely silly, or infinitely wicked objects. No; the only basis for belief in the Trinity is the pressure for the doctrine as we do the commandments of God. If the pressure of these needs should lessen, our hold on the doctrine of the Trinity would slacken. If the pressure should still further decrease we would surrender the thought of the moral nature of God, and complete removal of the pressure might do away with belief in God altogether. Instead of trying to find some other foundation we ought frankly to face our problem and insist upon the superior stability of a basis which rises out of the mighty upward push of ethical needs. All we ask of reason is that it shall help us express the implications which ethical convictions carry with them; and that it shall free us from thought which is self-contradictory. Instead of haggling with merely "intellectual" reasoners over the technically logical standing of some belief in Christian philosophy, we should make all reasonable allowance for the frailty of human reasoning and then insist that these beliefs have something of the warrant of the Master's utterance about doing the will and knowing the truth.

There ought to be some value too in the thought of the text for our true attitude as reverent critics of the Biblical literature. We are living in an age when science takes all things seriously; and scientific methods are employed as never before in the test of the Scripture narrative. It would be hard to say too much in praise of the results which have come from these methods in the hands of many experts. But there is a danger lest the



methods become too entirely the methods of the merely professional investigator. The exclusive reliance on the strictly technical tends to the deadening of that spiritual sympathy which ought to be supreme in Biblical criticism. "I never read anything about the Bible which is not critical" said a distinguished theological professor recently. Some of this scholar's unreliability is explained by the statement. Critical investigation ought to be accompanied with that keenness of spiritual insight which is the deposit and outcome of doing the will of God. This ethical insight will mean more than months of technical scrutiny. If the merely textual critic of Shakespeare is to be distrusted, why should not the merely textual critic of the Scripture be distrusted? If a critic must steep his mind with the very spirit of Shakespeare before he really becomes able to speak with authority about the author and his work, why should not the same rule hold in the study of the Bible? If the one way to come into close understanding of the spirit of Jesus is by doing the will of God, why should not religious devotion be exalted as an indispensable equipment for the study of the word of God?

Let us see if this principle can be made of any practical benefit. Take the narratives of the Virgin Birth, for example. The critics busy themselves with minute technical and professional scrutiny of the Gospel account. Many of them seem to think that their critical and scientific processes are the final reliance in the attainment of whatever truth is to be reached. But the man who, out of complete devotion to the will of God, has brought his thought to sympathy with the fineness of the Spirit which is back of and beneath the Book makes almost instantly this significant discovery,—that whereas it would have been deemed *apriori* improbable that the narrative could be told without shocking reverence, yet that very wonder has been accomplished. The story is there, and is there with an exquisite delicacy which is quite a considerable argument for its veracity.

Or take another incident even more detailed. We have in John the story of the Master's treatment of the woman taken in adultery. The critics tell us that the narrative did not originally have a place in John's Gospel,—that it was put in at a date later than the date of the Gospel and by a hand other than that of the apostle. This we are entirely willing to concede. But when the critic goes further and insists that the narrative cannot be true, we demur. We are perfectly willing to take any critical conclusions forced upon us by the facts, but we insist, first, that this question be considered. How does it happen that the narrative appeals to those who have by righteous life come to closest understanding of the spirit of Jesus as perfectly in harmony with what we should expect of His character? We cannot believe that any one could have beforehand predicted what Jesus would do in a situation like that of the story, but we feel that the narrative is true to Him. We would not exalt this principle unreasonably, but we nevertheless feel that in this case and in others like it the merely technical methods of the professionalist are not the final instruments. The insight that comes out of doing the will of God is no unimportant part of the furnishing of the competent Biblical student. Instead of telling men to prepare themselves with the latest technical knowledge so as to be able to meet destructive

criticism on its own ground, it would seem just at present to be in order to call also for the development of a spiritual insight to which the destructive critic does not attain. Better make the attack upon him from that higher ground to which he does not come.

Not only has this principle philosophical and critical value, but it has also homiletical value. It is our aim as teachers and preachers to instruct men in the teaching of Jesus. How shall we do this? The important method is that of this passage,—the stirring of the depths of the ethical life to the doing of the will of God. I suppose that Jesus depended very little, after all, on His direct oral teaching for the development of the twelve for apostleship. He did not insist upon note book methods of instruction. He aimed to get the disciples to doing the will of God. In the midst of all our attempts to get the Gospel into some simple form so that men may see it at a glance, we should not let go of this fundamental principle of the Master's pedagogics,—that the truth worth seeing can only be seen as we do the will of God,—that unless we rouse the wills of men to righteousness we cannot get them to understand the Gospel. How this is to be done is a problem that taxes us to the utmost, but if we can do it we have the essential thing, not only for the salvation of the souls of the men with whom we work, but for the enlightenment of the church and the world as to the truth of the system which came with Jesus.

If it will not unduly extend a paper already too long, let me say in closing that it seems to me that we have in this utterance of Jesus a glimpse at the truth in that most fascinating of all realms of study,—the inquiry as to the secret of the wisdom of Jesus and the unfolding of His mind. For those who think that Jesus brought all His knowledge with Him from the beginning,—that He surrendered nothing in becoming man, this question has of course no meaning. But those of us who believe that it really cost the Son of God something substantial to become man are not willing to admit that all wisdom was His from childhood. We can see that the personal thread of inalienable self-feeling must have been with the Master in all phases of His existence, but we cannot think that His self-knowledge and His penetration of the depths of the wisdom of God came without effort of will. We feel that we have the key to the secret in this passage. From the beginning the will of Jesus swung intuitively toward God. As He did the will of the Father that infinite wisdom which is of God descended as a matter of course. So far as concerns the essential body of His teaching He found the truth not by miraculous revelation, but by profound conviction resulting from perfect obedience to the will above. Out of the perfect deed came the perfect knowledge. Jesus spoke out of His own experience when He said that doing the will of God would bring certainty as to the truth.

The lesson brings not only enlightenment but encouragement. As we approximate to His devotion to the will of God we shall approximate to His understanding of the wisdom of God. The one thing that keeps back the descent of the perfect wisdom is imperfect, half-hearted doing. If we could go about doing good as He did we could more speedily come near the wisdom which was His.

## \* SPIRIT AND LIFE.

(ST. JOHN 7:37-39.)

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The doctrine of the Spirit as stated in the seventh chapter of John's Gospel, impresses one even at the first glance with its vastness and its mystery. What do these texts mean? "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet *given*; because Jesus was not yet glorified".

Here are two distinct utterances; the former was spoken by Jesus, and the latter is an interpretation of His words by the writer of the Fourth Gospel. The Master was speaking to seekers after the truth rather than to the disciples. He says in substance: If you are really athirst for God and for reality, come to Me, trust Me, believe on Me, and you shall be so full of the true life that it will flow out of you as waters from an overflowing fountain. In other words if you really desire truth and right, come into personal contact with Me and you will receive what you desire in abundance.

If those who are athirst for truth and right will accept Jesus and follow Him, they will be enabled to live the life of the Spirit, to realize the power of the Spirit, and to help others to do so. Let us consider spirit as life in the history of mankind. Spirit is *light* because it is life. Spirit is universal; consequently light is universal. Spirit according to the Christian usage of the word is everywhere that the Christian revelation has gone. The spiritual life is the spirit in man which is spelled with a small s, touched by the Spirit of God which is spelled with a capital S. Within all true Christians, therefore, is all the light they need for illumination and guidance. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One and need not that any man should teach you". This, as I understand it, is the doctrine of the Quakers. "When He, the spirit of truth will come, He will lead you into all truth and show you things to come". What does this mean? That some external divine light in some strangely mystical way falls upon us and illuminates our path? Does it not mean rather that within the souls of all men there is light, obscured, perhaps, but surely there, which is sufficient for all man's duties; that the candle in every soul is lighted by the sun which is God, and that it is our supreme duty and privilege to use the light which shines

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\* Abstract of an address delivered at the Fourth Conference, held at Grace Episcopal Church, January 13, 1904.



within, and which will never fail those who are pure in mind and loyal in heart.

The chief spiritual difficulty of our time is that we are not willing to know ourselves. The oracle was right, "Know thyself", for thus, and thus only may you hope to know God. I am well aware that it may be said in reply: "Then all authoritative standards go,—then the guess of one man is worth as much as the guess of another". But there is the mistake. I am not speaking of the guesses of any man, but I am insisting that the final truth is written within as surely, if not as clearly, as without; that it was within before it was without; that it was expedient for Jesus to go away in order that the eyes of His disciples might be turned inward rather than outward; and that we have no more sacred obligation than to study the truth in the inner light, and that no man who is loyal to himself can, at the same time, be false to God.

Our next point is that Spirit which is life is the cause of progress and, may it not be said, the efficient force in evolution? What is evolution? It is the gradual development according to inherent laws, of a resident force. What is that force? I choose to call it Spirit. Indeed evolution seems to me to be the process by which the Spirit immanent in the universe responds to the Spirit who transcends the universe.

Finally the spiritualization of all men and of all institutions is the goal of history. All men are spirits; but all do not live in the realization of their spiritual origin and destiny. A spiritual being has been evolved, but often turns back to fleshly conditions from which he has risen and does not know himself to be a spirit. That is sin.

Individuals are spiritualized when they realize that they are spirits come from God, and live according to their higher rather than their lower natures. And this is the lesson of lessons—actually to appreciate that we are spirits, and that, as naturally as flowers turn toward the sun, when we are our true selves we turn toward God the Father of spirits, and are dissatisfied with everything at enmity with Him. When men shall dwell in the consciousness that they are partakers of God's very nature, and therefore spirits, for He is Spirit, and are in harmonious relations with one another, as God-like spirits must be, then the race will be spiritualized, and the triumph of the Kingdom of God will be near.

The Spirit of God identifying Himself with the spirit in man is "The inner light",—the candle of the Lord,—the revealer of truth and duty.

He is the inspiration toward holy conduct, the power which makes truth to become life.

He is the cause of progress in individuals and among the institutions of men; and the spiritualization of the whole race of man, until the vilest and meanest shall think the thoughts and do the deeds and share the glory of Christ, is the goal of history,

"The one far-off event  
Toward which the whole creation moves".

## \* THE SINLESSNESS OF JESUS.

(ST. JOHN 8:29, 46.)

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Invited to address this Conference upon the subject of the sinlessness of Jesus as evidenced by the contents of certain specified chapters of the Fourth Gospel, I felt, for the moment, that I had been shut up between too narrow limits. Why not listen to St. Peter and St. Paul, I asked myself, as well as to St. John? Or if, for sufficient reason, one must needs be confined to a solitary New Testament author, why not be given access to all of that author's writings, rather than be tied down to a fractional portion of a single one of them? Had not St. John dealt with this topic in his LETTERS as well as in his Gospel?

Enquiry and meditation, however, soon convinced me that the range given was amply wide, and that a single chapter out of the designated four furnished enough, and more than enough material to supply all my need. I even found it possible to narrow down the sources of information still further, and confess myself, to-day, quite content to stake the whole issue upon two detached sayings, one of them a question and the other an affirmation,—both of them together not covering more than twenty words.

The secret of this abatement in my demand upon Holy Scripture lies here. I am convinced that certitude as to the sinlessness of Jesus is really conditioned upon an act of faith. We declare Him sinless not because we have critically reviewed His life and found no flaw, but because we have yielded assent to what He says about Himself. In other words, "Christ alone without sin" is a dogma, not a generalization. Absolutely to prove the point from facts observed is impossible. We get at it by believing in words spoken, by crediting, for sufficient cause, a solemn asseveration. I learned this from James Mozley, one of the keenest as well as weightiest of the nineteenth-century theologians.

In the course of a controversy waged with Professor Tyndall, late in the sixties, over the subject of miracles, Mozley found occasion to show, and did show most convincingly, the utter impossibility of proving in any case inward sanctity from outward actions. He instances our Lord's denunciations of the Scribes and Pharisees, and then remarks: "To those who admit, upon the evidence which is laid before them, our Lord's sinlessness, there is not the slightest discord between such language and such sinlessness, but common reason tells us that had we to judge of such language without the assumption of our Lord's sinless character, we could not tell but that some element of imperfection, some shade of prejudice, some pas-

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\*Delivered at the Fourth Conference, held at Grace Episcopal Church, January 13, 1904.

sionate excess, might enter into such censures. The majesty, the integrity, the holiness of our Lord's character is indeed conspicuous and obvious upon the facts of the case, but when we attribute absolute sinlessness to Him, it is plain that by the laws of reason we must be going upon some further evidence than that which is contained in His outward life and deportment".

The method to which Mozley in these words points us is so unlike that commonly adopted by Christian apologists, that we shall do well to make sure of understanding it. The more usual course with defenders of the faith is, as we know, to marshal the facts and incidents which in the four Gospels connect themselves, more or less closely, with the person of Christ, and then to urge the conclusion that a life so luminous in its entirety must necessarily have been in its details wholly without spot. But to one who realizes the universality of sin, to one who discerns in sin a characteristic of the human lot which none escapes or can escape, such reasoning is scarcely satisfactory. It may and does suffice to prove the Son of Mary holier than any other born of woman, but to be sinless, in the fullest and deepest sense the word can bear, means to be what no man ever has been, unless we recognize this one solitary exception. In a word, if Jesus was really sinless, His sinlessness must count as the miracle of history, more marvelous than any other recorded marvel, a wonder beyond all other wonders, signal and unique. Surely if there be any phenomenon that transcends experience and defies parallel it is sinlessness, and since under the most favorable of circumstances it is confessedly difficult to authenticate a miracle, doubly difficult ought it to be reckoned to establish in any given instance absolute immunity from blame. A character may be so white and pure as literally to dazzle us by the brilliancy of its perfection, (there have been such,) and yet be far from sinless. Though the unaided eye discerns them not, there are spots on the sun.

"The very source and fount of day  
Is flecked with wandering isles of night".

Who, then, is this Light of the World, this Sun of Righteousness, that of Him any should dare to say, He alone among the hundreds of thousands of millions who have come into this world out of the unseen was sinless? The facts of His life do, indeed, prove Him to have been the holiest of men, but there is a difference between being the holiest of men and being holy as God is holy.

We are in a temper now to look at the two sayings out of St. John's Gospel, one of them an affirmation, one a question, upon which I declared myself willing to rest the whole case. They are these: "I do always those things which please Him". "Which of you convicteth me of sin?"

These words unquestionably place Jesus of Nazareth in a class by Himself. It is not known that any other human being ever used the like. The two utterances differ in form; the one is a positive assertion, the other is a challenge, but in purport they are identical. Always to do those things which please God is, *ex vi termini*, to be sinless, for on this same Evangelist's authority "he that doeth righteousness is righteous".



The question is, can we, and do we, trust Jesus Christ, when He thus speaks? If we can and do, the entire question in controversy is for us settled; the miracle of history is acknowledged, the unique exception recognized. No longer do we find it necessary laboriously to examine and critically to weigh the arguments for and against this point of sinlessness. We say, as the Samaritans said to the woman who had brought them out from their city to the place where Jesus was: "Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard Him ourselves and know that this is indeed the Christ".

Depend upon it, friends, this whole matter of religion, as Christians have to do with it, is an affair of personal confidence, to be settled like any other affair of personal confidence—can I trust him or can I not? "The man believed the word which Jesus had spoken unto him, and went his way". That tells the whole story.

Clear-cut against the background of the past stands Jesus Christ. We talk about forgetting Him, ignoring Him, relegating Him to obscurity, voting Him obsolete. It cannot be done. There He stands. His eyes, like the eyes of a portrait on the wall, follow us whithersoever, in this narrow room called human life, we turn. Thrust aside even ever so violently He cannot be, waved aside even ever so courteously He will not be. He is here to stay. Reckon with Him we must.

Well then, on the whole, shall we trust Him? I say "on the whole", wishing by that phrase to intimate that I have no disposition to minimize the difficulties of faith. But after making all the allowance that you please or that the facts in the case demand for draw-backs and set-backs, after discounting the clatter of the critics, the cold neutrality of the literary guild, the strivings of the many that oppose themselves by whatsoever name known or called,—on the whole, all things considered, Christendom being what it is, these nineteen hundred years having been what they have been, can we do better, you and I, than take Jesus at His word? If we do, the sinlessness is part of it all. Which of us convicteth Him of sin? Not one, and why? For the simple reason that He is innocent.

"I do always" He says, "those things that please Him". "Assertion, pure assertion!"—yes, I grant it,—but then we have just agreed that, on the whole, we see our way to giving the asserter our confidence. That settles the matter. Even as those who first trusted in Christ, in Christ we trust.

I propose now to set opposite this statement, "I do always such things as please Him", three other New Testament affirmations, which, upon their face, appear to contravene it. If we find after analysis and investigation that these sayings, so far from being contradictory to, are really confirmatory of the sinlessness of Jesus, we shall be in a position to declare that the men upon whose teaching Christendom is founded, are, with respect to this all-important point, of one mind.

"Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God". Jesus Christ said this. Had He known Himself to be sinless would He have so spoken? Not unless He was conscious of being out of the category which held the one whom He addressed, not unless He was intending to

bring out into clear light His own essential divinity. There is none good but God, if I am good, I must be God, and conversely, *Aut Deus, aut non bonus*.

Recall the dialogue and note a point in it too commonly missed. The questioner is the young man who has great possessions, but who would fain add to them, if he may, the further treasure of eternal life. Christ says to him, "If thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments". The young man asks "Which?" Now we should naturally expect, should we not, that in answer to this question Jesus would begin with the first commandment and go on consecutively to the tenth. He does nothing of the sort. He skips the entire first table, He omits the whole of the duty towards God, begins,—“Thou shalt do no murder”, and confines Himself wholly to those of the ten words which cover our duty towards our fellow man,—a strange hiatus. But note what follows. “All these”, the young man declares, “Have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?” The obvious, nay, the absolutely necessary answer would seem to be, “What thou lackest is compliance with that portion of the law which thus far I have not named, the duty towards God”. Such, I say, would seem to be the one reply which the situation demands.

But that is not what we find. What we find is this,—“If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me”. Come, follow Me. Who is this, we ask, amazed, who dares to make the following of him, the one thing lacking for a man who has only so far professed compliance with the second table of the law? Who can it be save the One Whom to trust and Whom to serve, is the same thing as to do our duty towards God? The hiatus is filled, the gap covered, the whole law kept.

The second affirmation to which I made reference, as seemingly inconsistent with the sinlessness of Jesus, is this. “Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered, and being made perfect He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him”. You recognize the passage as quoted from the Epistle to the Hebrews. Let us look at it. Disobedience to lawful authority is surely not compatible with sinlessness. And yet, this writer seems to speak as if there was once a time when it could be truly said of the Lord Jesus that He did not know how to obey, in fact had to begin learning how? But pray whither should we go in search of evidence that such a time there was? We have, it is true, no authentic Gospel of the infancy, but we have a Gospel of the childhood, and what do we there read? Why, simply this—and it tells the whole story,—“He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them”. And what of His later years? In all that the Evangelists have to tell of that marvelous life, is there to be found the slightest hint of a refusal to obey any rightful authority human or divine? Is not their whole narrative from first to last confirmatory of the,—“I do always those things that please Him”?

Clearly, unless we are to reckon Christ “among the transgressors” in

a sense quite contrary to that in which His followers have all along been interpreting the prophet's phrase, there must be some way of understanding what it means to "learn obedience" other than that which makes it identical with learning how to obey. A disobedient Christ could have no standing room in the church's creed. It is the One Who says "I come to do Thy will" Whom we confess, the keeper alike of God's least commandments and of His greatest, the sinless One. But how shall we interpret learning obedience in such a way as to make Christ's having done so not inconsistent with such a faith? In this way, I submit, by taking it to mean one's becoming acquainted with the whole territory covered and included by obedience. The man who has learned painting is other and more than the man who has merely learned to paint. The man who has learned music is other and more than the man who has simply learned how to play upon an instrument. The man who has learned painting has explored the entire subject from first to last; he knows it historically, he knows it critically, he knows it practically, he can tell you who the great painters have been, what were the characteristics of their various styles, and all about it; he has covered the whole ground. So with learning obedience, we may understand the phrase in the narrow and limited sense of simply learning to do as one is bid, or we may understand it in this larger and broader sense of learning how much a really genuine obedience involves, learning, so to say, the whole cubic contents of obedience, as obedience stands related to human life. This last is the way in which Christ learned obedience, He grew to be master of the whole subject and the method whereby this mastership was acquired was the method of suffering. It is written of the child Christ that He "increased" in wisdom as well as in stature, and part of this increase we may well believe was in that particular kind of wisdom by which men come to know how much a really complete obedience covers and involves. The only difference between the Christ-child and other Nazareth children in this respect was that He never disobeyed. Whatever least thing was taught by suffering was straightway put in practice. With the ordinary child it is not so. In the school of suffering the lesson has to be taught many times, it has to be line upon line and precept upon precept before the pupil can be depended upon to act up to it. Disobedience is an act of the will. There is no such thing as disobeying without a conscious determination to do so.

Christ had only to know what obedience required of Him, and at once He did it. But in this sort of wisdom, the learning what obedience did require, He, from day to day, from year to year, "increased" until, at last made perfect in it, He could say that it was learned, even though in the whole process of learning there had been no single instance of transgression; and only when there is transgression is there sin.

The third saying which I quote as being seemingly in conflict with the dogma, Christ alone without sin, is also from the Epistle to the Hebrews. In that Scripture we find Christ spoken of as "One that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin". How can He, we ask, have been without sin if tempted in all points like as we are. In us there is an



element of consent, which goes out to meet the temptation half-way so to speak. We cannot say of ourselves as Christ said of Himself that Satan cometh and finds nothing in us. He finds too much. But let us see whether we cannot establish a parallelism between Christ's temptation and ours, which while it shows us sinful at the same time leaves Him sinless.

It is common to explain the three temptations in the wilderness by saying that the first of them, "Command that these stones be made bread", was addressed to the animal element that is in every man; that the second, "Cast Thyself down", was an appeal to spiritual pride, and that the third, "All these things will I give Thee, if—", was an attempt to work upon ambition in the common, worldly sense. But I think it will be more to our present purpose if we insist on looking at all three of the temptations as intended to undermine the Son's confidence in the Father. You recall the wording of the tempter's appeal, *If Thou be the Son of God,—do this; If Thou be the Son of God,—do that.*

We must keep it in mind that this crisis in our Lord's life followed close upon the baptism. Jesus had just been inducted, as we may say, into His office as the Christ. The voice had said from heaven, "This is My beloved Son", and John the baptizer had solemnly borne witness to the coming of the greater than himself.

Full of this consciousness of a heavenly mission, awakened perhaps for the first time to a clear understanding of all that He really was, the Son of Mary had come into the wilderness to ponder these things, to feed upon them, as it were, while denying Himself all other food. This, then, was the grand point of attack, the confidence in the heavenly Fatherhood. If the tempter could only shake this trust of Sonship, only break up this filial sense, his bad end would be accomplished.

"If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread".

"If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down from this pinnacle".

These are challenges,—challenges coupled with a sneer. The suggestion is that the powers of God's world, the forces of His universe, are hostile, not friendly, and that because of their being so the divine Fatherhood cannot be trusted or depended upon. Is there nothing in the experience of modern man that tallies with all this? Have not you and I, in our measure and degree, to grapple with these same temptations?

Who, we cry, can be counted upon to turn the stones that strew so thickly the wilderness of this life of ours into bread that shall satisfy our hunger? Who, in the midst of the many and great perils that compass all our ways, will keep us from being dashed to pieces if we fall? Not God, surely, for God works through nature, and nature is under the hard rule of law, and there is nothing for us save simple acquiescence in what seems to be our doom. There is nothing very unfamiliar about this,—is there? This is no strange temptation that thus befalls us, but such a one as is common to modern man,—the temptation to distrust God's love, the temptation to disbelieve in His care, to repudiate the Sonship. But, after all, the only thing we need to help us out of our distress is patience. In wonderful ways,

and with a rapidity never before observed, the Author of Nature is making nature plastic to our hands. She is no longer the cruel mistress she used to be. When she presses us hard with her pains and bruises, her accidents and sicknesses, and we feel moved almost to despair at the thought of all her waves and billows going over us, let us say to ourselves: "This is my temptation; God is my Father all the same. For reasons of His own He is letting these forces buffet me, letting me be tossed about, battered and tortured, but He is all the while just as truly my Father, just as really my friend, as if He were turning stones into bread at my appeal, or giving angels charge to bear me miraculously in their hands lest I strike my foot against gargoyle or capital. Be sure whatever voice bids us think otherwise is a tempting voice, a scoffing voice, a voice against which we shall do well to shut our ears.

The last of the temptations stands alone and by itself. The devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. These, he says, are mine and to whomsoever I will I give them, and Thou shalt have them, if Thou wilt only fall down and worship me. But even in this case, different as the subject-matter of the temptation is from that of the other two, even here we discern the same bad motive lurking in the back-ground, the same malicious resolve to break down, if it can possibly be done, the soul's confidence in the Fatherhood of God. It is Satan masquerading as the King. "Consider all this grandeur," the tempter says, "see all this magnificent paraphernalia of war and peace, of enterprise and achievement. Look yonder at those parliaments and congresses, those armies and navies. Contemplate those huge industries symbolized by factory and workshop and warehouse. Watch the emigrations that are going on, the commingling of races, the peopling of continents, and think of what it means to have the ordering of all this. Think of the honor and the advantage of being my prime minister in the government of so various and interesting a realm".

But this temptation like the others rests on the rotten substructure of a lie. This that the tempter says, is false, utterly, absolutely, everlastingly false. It is the power of goodness, not the power of evil, that really rules these manifold affairs of men. God, not Satan, is the sovereign commander of all the world. The vain pomp and glory of the world may be in Satan's gift, but the true and solid glory of the world is God's affair, not his. The great activities of human life are under the guidance of Him Whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth. This vast administration which covers and comprehends both State and Church, is carried on in the interests of righteousness, and any voice which whispers in our ear that to succeed we must sell ourself to Satan, is cajoling us to our ruin. The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof. Let us not imagine that any save this supreme proprietor can ever give us a clear title, to the permanent possession of any single square foot of it. It is the meek-spirited and they only who can expect to hold in perpetuity, these shall inherit the earth.

Thus was Christ tempted in all points like as we are. He stood it. We, with varying degrees of failure, we succumb.

I have tried to show that His confident assertion, "I do always those things which please Him", finds nothing in the New Testament to contradict it, and that the right answer to His question "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?" is this, "No man, Lord".



## \* THE EVIDENTIAL VALUE OF MIRACLES.

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The topic assigned me assumes that miracles, presumably the miracles of Jesus especially as reported in the Fourth Gospel, have an evidential value.

To one who stops to consider the assaults that have been made upon the miraculous element in early Christian history, in the name of philosophy, science, history, and even of ethics, and the consequent elaborate defence of miracles rendered necessary by those assaults, the question can but suggest itself whether the recorded miracles are not rather a burden than a support to faith.

Not a few have so thought, and have demanded that in the interests of Christian propagandism, at least in these days, we shall confess that the miracle stories of the Gospels are entirely incredible. I cannot agree with those who so think, and I do not believe that any one who has thoroughly mastered the principles of a sound philosophy, or who recognizes the limitations of science, or who comprehends the fundamentals of historical criticism, can doubt the reality of the miraculous element in the life of Jesus. The denial of the miraculous is based on a philosophy now falling rapidly into discredit, and upon a conception of science and history which must fall when that philosophy falls, as fall it must, and that soon, for it is now tottering. The flood of materialism in philosophy, science and history has been outridden by the modern ark with its considerable family of those who through all the storm held serenely fast to the truth.

Still to those who are influenced by that wholly absurd philosophy, whether they be found in high places or in lowly, miracles must of necessity appear impossible. Some of these people are to be pitied—perhaps all of them. But some of them are to be condemned as pretenders, particularly those who profess to be philosophers; for they have never once looked at the real problems of philosophy with open eyes.

But while some are to be pitied, and some are to be condemned, all need laboring with; and it is a great temptation to enter here rather upon an argument in support of miracles than upon an argument which makes miracles a support to faith. I desist simply and solely because I wish to adhere to my topic, and because I presume that Dr. Strong did, a few weeks ago, all that needs doing in this line, in a single course of lectures.

Nevertheless, even after philosophy, science and history have been permitted to give their testimony, and have been cross-examined, and after

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it has been found that they have nothing to say against belief in miracles, but that at least two of these three witnesses, philosophy and history, offer practically compulsory evidence in favor of miracles, the question still arises, what is their evidential value? Not only what was it to those who saw the miracles performed, but what is it to us?

This question divides into two parts: First, as to the manner in which the miracles buttress faith. The answer to this is found in the relation of the miracles of Christ to the claims of Christ. Those claims would have been mere idle boasts had He not wrought miracles. Any one can make claims; not every man's deeds match his claims. When profession and deed do not correspond we rightly doubt the validity of the claim.

There were at least two claims made by Christ that demanded miracle for their support. The first is His claim of authority—authority to forgive sin; to control the kingdom of God on earth; to determine the destinies of men. A claim to authority in these realms can be supported only by the exhibition of the divine power requisite to the execution of such a divine mission.

There is not a little danger of confusion at this point. Not infrequently we hear it said that the regular course of nature is a better evidence of the divine operation in the world than any irregularity or miraculous operations could be. And this is true. Some, however, fail to see that this does not touch the question as to the attestation of Christ's mission. We do not need miracles to show us that there is a God or that He is at work in the world. What we need miracles for is to show us that Christ's relation to the Father is what He said it was. And particularly did the people of His time need miracles for that purpose. His ministry was brief. Time was not allowed for the development of all those beneficent results which the reign of Christ in the hearts of men has produced and which are our best evidence of His right to reign. What was to be done for His generation had to be done quickly. Hence miracles were a necessity at the first, though for purposes of attesting Christ and His apostles they became less necessary as time went on.

In view of all these considerations it is plain that the Jews were not altogether in the wrong in asking for a sign. Jesus refused to give this sign for several reasons; but the legitimacy of the demand He did not apparently deny. It was unfortunately a wicked and adulterous generation that required the sign. The demand sprang from hostility, not from a spirit of honest inquiry.

Now suppose that with such extraordinary claims and such need of attestation there had been no extraordinary deeds illustrative of His divine power, what would have become of His claims? The people of His day simply could not have acknowledged them. The discrepancy between word and deed would have been too great.

Especially true is this of the second claim referred to,—His claim of being the highest conceivable manifestation of divine love. He who claims practically infinite power and love must not fail to exhibit them in combi-

nation if his claims are to be believed. His claims to be incarnate omnipotence must be substantiated by omnipotent works wrought during the incarnate state. The claim to be the incarnation of omnipotent love must be substantiated by omnipotent works of a benevolent type. The being who claims the power to do good and who does not do good is rightly held to be either an impostor or unfeeling. In view of His claims Christ without His miracles would be wholly anomalous. The profession of love and power matched by the exercise of power in the interest of love is a consistent picture.

The second phase of the question concerning the evidential value of miracles pertains to the degree or amount of that value. This again divides into two parts: First, do the miracles compel assent? and second, are they sufficient as evidence?

The first of these questions does not admit either of a categorical affirmative or negative. Very certain is it that those miracle stories do not directly compel our assent to Christ's claims. Without them we could not believe; but for many they are merely the condition of belief, not its ground. They are necessary to a consistent picture, and a consistent picture tells for credibility. But the question still remains unanswered whether the picture is imaginary or real, and the answer to that question is to be sought in the whole realm of Christian evidences. It may be said, however, that one who unhesitatingly accepts the fact of Christ's miracles must accept Christ's claims; and there are unnumbered multitudes who do accept both His miracles and His claims. Those with whom the miracles are themselves a problem cannot, of course, use them as a strong support of faith. With them the correctness of the consistent picture is still in doubt.

This leads to the second point, namely, whether the miracles are sufficient evidence. It is plain that they are not. Nor are they the best evidence. One might accept the miracles and so the claims of Christ without becoming a practical Christian. Only that evidence which results in practical Christian living is adequate. Miracles have their place, but they cannot do everything. We must have them, but they are by no means our sole reliance.

So much then for the general question of the evidential value of miracles. It is time to come to the special question as to the evidential value of miracles as seen in the Fourth Gospel.

It is a generally recognized fact that this Gospel was written with the object of producing belief in Christ on the part of those who had never seen Him and it is worth noting that it was the whole Gospel, not the miracles alone, that was to produce faith. "These things were written", says John, that is, all these things, "that ye might believe". Furthermore we find that Jesus appealed to His whole ministry in proof of His mission, and not to His miracles alone or chiefly.

I think that at this point there is considerable misunderstanding. Jesus says (10:37, 38):—"If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not



But if I do them, though ye believe not Me, believe the works: that ye may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father". And again (14:11):—"Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake".

These passages, with others, have, I think, been generally understood as Christ's appeal to the convincing power of His miracles. Most readers, when they read these passages, mentally substitute miracles for works, as though He had said believe Me for the sake, or on account of the miracles.

I cannot help feeling that this is an erroneous interpretation. Doubtless His works include His miracles, but His miracles are by no means the whole of His works. The word translated "work" is *ergon*, plural *erga*. The word translated "miracle" is *semeion*, plural *semeia*. Jesus is never represented as appealing to His *semeia*, but always to His *erga*. Had He meant to appeal to His miracles only as attesting His nature and mission, He would have used the other word. Besides, His references to His works in other connections show that they were not miracles alone. In chapter 5:36, He says: "The works which the Father hath given Me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of Me". And in 10:32, "Many good works have I showed you from the Father; for which of those works do ye stone Me?" The Jews answered Him: "For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy". And in 10:37, "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not". Also 9:4, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day".

The works of the Father—the works that the Father gave Him to accomplish! Were these works miracles only? Did the Father send His Son into the world for the sole purpose of working miracles? Great as they were, and great as was their significance, it is impossible that the miracles of Jesus exhausted His mission, and that everything He did and said over and above this was no part of the Father's purpose in Him. It is unbelievable that all those good works in the ordinary human sense of faithfulness to duty, loyalty to principle, courage in the execution of one's tasks in the midst of threatening danger, renunciation of the material in the interest of the spiritual, manifestation of sympathy, love, and human interest in human interests—I say it is unbelievable that these were no part of the works of the Father given to Jesus to accomplish. If the miraculous works are necessary as a credential, equally so are these ordinary, every-day good works necessary. And if we may judge from the record, it was just these plain and homely good works that engaged the greater part of His time. The miracles were the exceptional aspect of His activity. It is doubtless true that when He spoke of His works He included His miracles; but He certainly did not confine His thought to them.

It is in strict accordance with this view of the case that men are represented as believing in Jesus because of His words. Such a case we have in the Samaritan mentioned in 4:41; also in the officers who were sent to arrest Christ, but who returned and said: "Never man spake like this

man" (7:46); and of many Jews of whom it is said that while "He spake these words many believed on Him" (7:30). In line with this also is the fact that His miracles did not always either produce or sustain faith in Him. In 12:37 we read "That though He had done so many *semeia* before them, yet they believed not on Him"; and again in chapter 6, it is said that after certain words of Christ, many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. This, of course, was in spite of His miracles.

On the other hand many did, apparently believe because of His miracles. We have accounts of such in 2:23; and in 3:2, when Nicodemus is represented as recognizing the divine mission of Jesus through His miracles. The woman of Samaria also believed Him to be the Messiah because of His miraculous knowledge of her life. Furthermore, Jesus apparently felt that His miracles ought to be taken into account in the determination of men's relation to Him. "Though ye believe not Me, believe the works" (10:38). "If I had not done among them the works which none other did, they had not had sin" (15:24). These passages do not refer to His miracles alone, but they do, nevertheless, refer to the miracles. He had lived His life among them on high levels. Deed miraculous and deed non-miraculous had matched word in Him. His claims had been high, but His works had been high also. There was no excuse for unbelief. So He thought and so we think. That though they had seen Him perform so many miracles and so many other good works, all correspondent to His demands upon men, and yet that they should not yield to His demands, was reprehensible indeed.

And yet Christ did not work His miracles for the purpose of producing belief in Him. I am aware that the assertion I have just made is contrary to the received opinion, according to which He felt that in order to sustain His high claims He must attest Himself by miracles which He wrought as a credential of His authority.

I can, perhaps, express my own understanding of this matter in this way: Jesus knew full well that His miracles would tend to produce faith in Him, and He felt that it was right that they should contribute to this result: and yet those facts had no influence whatever in prompting Him to work His miracles, all of which would have been wrought if they had been of no evidential value in the sense of producing or sustaining faith in Him. I am thoroughly convinced that this is so for all the miracles mentioned in the Fourth Gospel, though I admit that one or two passages seem on the surface to suggest a few exceptions.

In order that the facts may be all brought before you I take up first those which militate against my contention, and then those which seem to me to support it.

The first argument which might be used in favor of the ordinary view is that the word so frequently translated *miracle* should be translated *sign*. When Jesus turned the water into wine it is said, "This beginning of signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory" (2:11). Nicodemus said: "No man can do these signs that Thou doest except God be with him" (3:2). Jesus said to certain persons: "Ye seek Me, not because

ye saw the signs, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled" (6 : 26). Many of the people said: "When Christ cometh, will He do more signs than these which this man hath done?" (7 : 31.) And so whenever in our King James translation of John, we read "miracles", we should literally translate "signs". In other words these miraculous works are unquestionably looked upon as signs—signs of the divine power and mission of Jesus. Does not that seem to show that Jesus wrought these works in order to prove His claims? The answer to this must be an emphatic "No". It is one thing to say that they are signs and it is quite another to say that they were wrought for the purpose of being signs. I think, therefore, that this consideration has no weight.

There are two miracles recorded in the Fourth Gospel which are referred to by Christ in language which seems to indicate that they were wrought for the purpose of producing faith. The first one is the case of the man who was born blind. When His disciples asked "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind", Jesus answered, "Neither did this man sin, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (9 : 2, 3). If we applied the ordinary view to this it would have to be understood as saying that the blindness was not caused by the sin either of the man or his parents, but was brought upon him in order that an opportunity should be presented for making manifest the works of God. But the implications of such an interpretation are obnoxious in the highest degree. We cannot, in this day, bring ourselves to believe that God would visit blindness for a long term of years upon any one in order to show that He had the power and love requisite to restore him to sight.

I pass this case for the present to take up the other similar one. When Jesus was informed that Lazarus was sick, He said: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby" (11 : 4). Here again we seem to be told that a loved friend of Jesus was made sick and a whole family of Jesus' dearest friends plunged into heartbreaking sorrow in order to give the Father an opportunity to glorify both Himself and His Son. So it appears to say, but really it does not seem to describe the action of God as you and I think of God in the light of the teachings of Christ. Was God so hard put to it that He had to create cases of blindness and sickness and death in order to show what His Son could do? Without any disposition to employ ridicule, I must say that one would have to think of Palestine as a remarkably healthy country if it did not furnish blind and sick in plenty upon whom Christ could exercise His miraculous power, without the necessity of blinding and sickening men in order to furnish opportunity for Him to prove His love and power.

There must be some other way of interpreting these passages more consonant with the love and wisdom of God. And hints of that other way we have in other passages. In 5 : 20, we read that "The Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth; and He will show Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel". Here God is represented as doing great works for the purpose of producing surprise,—a motive



so unworthy of God that we feel practically sure there must be some misunderstanding. In 12:37-40 we read: "But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him; that the word of Isaiah, the prophet might be fulfilled \* \* \* For this cause they could not believe, for that Isaiah said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and He hardened their hearts". If we take this language at what it literally says, we shall be obliged to believe that God actually prevented some from believing in order to secure the fulfilment of a prophecy. In 17:12, Jesus says: "Those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled". This is a case in which one is even said to be lost in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled. Works of God done in order to produce wonder; men rendered incapable of belief in order that the prophecy of Isaiah might be fulfilled; a soul lost in order that a passage in a psalm might be fulfilled! If we take the words "In order that" literally—if we understand them as expressing the prompting motive—we must believe such teaching to be part of the teaching of Christ Himself. I, for one, revolt, and refuse to take the language literally. What is really meant is that great works of God shall be done, and that men shall marvel; that men did not believe and thereby prophecy was fulfilled; that a soul was lost, and thus a psalm was paralleled in the history of Christ, or perhaps that thus we knew the psalm to be in part Messianic.

But there is about as much reason for revolting from the literalness that would have us believe that a man was born blind, or caused to sicken and die in order that Christ might glorify Himself and secure the belief of the onlookers by His works of restoration to sight and life. The words "in order that" must not always be taken as expressing motive; sometimes they express result. Such is the case here. A man was born blind and as a result some will believe in Christ when they see Him give the blind man His sight. A man sickened and died and as a result Christ will be glorified when men see Him restore the dead man to life. This interpretation is rational and Christian, even if not warranted by the construction. The other, though demanded by the construction is irrational and unchristian. But if the rational and Christian interpretation is to be accepted, then those passages do not teach that Jesus healed in order to produce faith. So that there is nothing left to show that He ever wrought miracles for that purpose or with that motive.

Taking up, now, the facts which seem to substantiate the view I here maintain, it must be noticed that when asked to show a sign He either avoided or declined the request. True, those who demanded a sign did so in a spirit of hostility. But it is incredible that One Who could do the wonderful things recorded in John could not have turned hostility into faith if He had chosen to do so. That He did not do so is the strongest evidence conceivable that His miracles were never wrought with such a motive.

An examination of the real motives of Jesus in the performance of His miracles, taking them one by one, shows that He was prompted by the

desire to bless and benefit men individually and collectively. His miracles were credentials, but they would have been wrought if they had been entirely barren of such a result. They sprang, not from His desire to make men believe on Him, but from His desire to do men good.

But, it may be said, why should He not have wrought miracles for the purpose of producing faith in Him? Would it not have been a worthy use of His miraculous power? Surely it would so appear. And yet, while we cannot give our Lord's reasons for holding Himself with inflexible firmness to the thought of doing some good instead of winning their faith, we cannot be too thankful that He did just as He did. In the first place, on the facts as here set forth, must all attempts to discredit His miracles by placing Him in the ranks of the wonder-workers go to pieces. It is just the motive of the wonder-worker that his deeds shall in some degree or manner increase the observers' esteem for the performer. Jesus sought nothing in return for His miracles—not even the faith in Himself which would have resulted in fresh benefit to the believer. We have before us in Christ the portrait of one who did His good deeds, whether miraculous or not, out of a loving heart, with absolutely no mixture of any other motive. Closely connected with this is a second thought. The example of Christ as He is thus set before us rebukes more effectually much of the unchristian effort of ministers and churches in all ages. Is it not true that we seek additions to our churches, in part at least, because of the strength those additions can bring to the church? And does not this lead to the feeling that as some can aid the church more than others the stronger ones should be most coveted? Yes, the church does all its faithful adherents more good than they do it; but would not our methods and results be different if we were prompted as Jesus was, wholly and solely by the spirit of love? And this naturally leads to a third thought, Jesus stands higher in the estimation of the world today because He did His works out of a spirit of love than He would had He mixed with it a desire to secure their faith in Him. And here is the evidential value of miracles in its highest form. They prove His power, but they also prove His love. Men might wonder at His power; they adore Him for His love. The world will be won to Christ not because He had the omnipotent power of God in Him, but because He had in Him God's infinite love. And this is the true evidential value of miracles.

## \*FREEDOM THROUGH THE TRUTH.

(ST. JOHN 8:31-36.)

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In discussing this theme, which has its place in a series of expositions of this Gospel, we must adhere rigidly to the terms of the Gospel in the definition of truth, of freedom, and the relation between the two.

Truth in this Gospel is not an impersonal proposition, not a series of definitions, no metaphysical statement, nor subjective conception, but objectively real, personally embodied, livingly interpreted.

Freedom is not a deliverance from external shackles by mechanical means, not the abrogation of control, but the emancipation of life to manifest itself in various forms, a process working not from without inward, but from within outward.

As the truth is vital the freedom must be by process, evolutionary and dynamic. Such a freedom will be the efflorescence of life and will follow the truth as naturally and inevitably as the fruit results from the forces resident in the root. From the point of view of John's Gospel, religion is divine life in the human soul.

*Definition of terms.* Jesus always explained His Gospel in terms of life. "I give unto them eternal life". "I am come that they might have life". In endeavoring to explain the principles of His Gospel and the relations which are to subsist between Himself and His followers, He chose some vital thing, some living organism as, for example, the vine, as alone an adequate explanation of the relation which is to exist between Himself and the believer. The indictment of Jesus against the religious leaders and the people of His day was that they would not come unto Him that they might have life. They went to the philosophers for theories, to the rabbis for precepts; they went to the prophets for principles, and to the Mosaic code for ceremonies; but they would not come unto Him that they might have life. This indictment is in force today. There is manifest reluctance to accept the gift which Christ alone can give.

Through the Christian centuries men have been forming and reforming creeds while Jesus gave the truth which would transform character. Even so learned a theologian and so prominent a Christian leader as President Patton, of Princeton, was asked whether in his judgment Christianity was a dogma or a life, and he replied, "It is a dogma". We see the fallacy of this definition when we take it back to Jesus and try to imag-

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\* Delivered at the Fourth Conference, held at Grace Episcopal Church, January 13, 1904.



ine Him saying, "I am come that they might have dogma, and that they might have it more abundantly".

But the learned president is not the only offender in this regard. According to our own point of view we are apt to say that religion consists in a method of organization, a mode of worship, or a statement of doctrine, and so make it a thing of formulæ, creeds, ceremonies, or priesthoods, according to the degree of our religious susceptibility, or according to our religious education, or according to our loyalty to tradition, as though these things were in themselves the ends to be sought and not only means to one single end. It was with reference to that sacred thing, the law, that Paul said it is a "schoolmaster to lead to Christ".

What was true of the most perfect expression of religious life in the olden time is true of everything else religious, ecclesiastic, doctrinal, that their only worth is in their usefulness in leading to a personal Christ. Jesus found religion sinking into a creed and a ceremony. He presented His Gospel not as a dogma to be believed, a statement to be discussed, or a task to be performed, but a life to be lived. The beginning of religious life is not the reception of a ceremony, subscription to a creed, or submission to an ordinance, but contact with a person.

His invitations were always personal. "Come unto *Me*" was frequently upon His lips. The only truth which the believer was asked to accept was the truth embodied in Himself. "I am the truth". The code of morals, the mode of conduct, the standard of life, were to be found in Himself. "I am the way". Indeed, the whole content of religion was defined in personal relations to Himself—"I am the life". He offered Himself as Master and Lord, and relied upon the personal loyalty of His disciples to sustain them in their obedience to Him. He offered the pleasure of association with Him as a sufficient compensation for the hardships of service, even though it involved denial of self and the bearing of the cross. Devotion to the personal Christ was to be at once the impulse and reward for every service. It is a person, not a dogma, that invites belief; a person, not a law, which invites obedience. "In Him is life and the life is the light of men". He inspires the thought, awakens the conscience, holds the heart, energizes the will. He is Himself the life-blood of Christianity, and as such the giver of life to those who receive Him. Nothing can create life but life itself. "He that hath the Son hath life". Jesus condemned the people of His time because in the light of overwhelming testimony concerning Himself they still rejected Him. He presents four witnesses as establishing His claims upon the supreme attention of the thinkers of His day.

*First, the testimony of John.* This is the more important and should have been the more impressive because John was led to the acceptance of Jesus by the resistless argument of His own personality. John was slow to accept Jesus because of his religious preconceptions. He had planned a program for Jesus in which he thought Jesus would perfectly acquiesce. He was, therefore, greatly amazed to have Jesus adopt a different mode of procedure, and could scarcely believe Him to be the promised Messiah. So

he sent messengers to ascertain whether He were indeed the Christ. He had predicted the axe laid at the root of the tree, the winnowing fan and the refining fire. But hearing of the beneficent services which Jesus was rendering to humanity in healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, preaching to the poor, he was perplexed beyond measure. Nevertheless, the testimony of John when once convinced, was direct and unequivocal. He stripped the veil which hid Christ's glory. He quickened the vision of his contemporaries, stimulated their conscience, stirred the apathy of the people of His time.

*The testimony of the works of Christ* were even more convincing. The activities of His hand had a divine but self-evidencing force which confirmed and established His claims. The *works* of Christ were His normal activities and deeds, which expressed the nature and compass of His will and indicated the quality of His personality. These works were not limited to the miracles of healing, the multiplication of the loaves, the increase of the wine, the raising of the dead, but the whole of His service; His total activity He presented in testimony as a self-revelation, the disclosure of His consecration, and they are all of such a character as to proclaim His divine commission. This entire service of Christ, reaching special expression in certain typical acts and deeds could not but confirm beyond a challenge the testimony of John.

*But as though this were not enough, the testimony of the Father was added.* Jesus was not content to present John's testimony or the evidence of His works as the complete vindication of His claims. He said, "There is another that beareth witness concerning Me", "The Father which hath sent Me". At His baptism the voice of the Father proclaimed Him to be His accepted Son, but, more than that, there accompanied Jesus in all His life and service an incontrovertible evidence of a deific presence as, *e. g.*, the angel song at His birth, the unusual providence which protected His childhood, the opening of the heavens at His baptism, the pervasive presence which was manifest in all His acts and made His ministry so influential and impressive. He was the manifestation of the Father's glory, the express image of His person.

As though to leave no witness unsummoned into court, there is added to all the evidence the *testimony of the Scriptures*. "They testify of Me". Jesus' criticism is that in searching the written word they were missing the living word. He admits their prolonged and eager study of the Scriptures, approves their motives in the research, but He criticises the superstitious idea that in the possession of the letter they had eternal life. "In them ye think ye have eternal life, but they are they which testify of Me, and ye will not come to Me that ye might have life".

This, then, is the indictment of Jesus against the people of His time. It is as true today. For, according to our point of view or our sense of need, we look to the schools for theory, to the church for ceremony, to philosophy for instruction, to priests for authority, to reason for light, to ordinances for inspiration, to confession for peace of soul, but will not go

to Christ that we may have life. And in consequence the religious world of today is serving in many a house of bondage, the bondage of the letter, the bondage of form, the bondage of tradition, the bondage of definition, from which only the truth as it is in the personal Christ can ever give a real emancipation,—that is, the emancipation of life.

The Romanist presents an infallible church as the end of all revelation, the seat of all authority. The Protestant presents an infallible book, but neither book nor church has life or can give life. They are but the staff of the prophet laid upon the child of the Shunamite. They are but dead sticks,—creeds, ordinances, doctrines, priests, preachers,—without the vital and vitalizing contact with the living Christ. As the living person of the prophet must needs be stretched upon the dead, lip to lip, nerve to nerve, forehead to forehead, nostril to nostril, heart to heart, limb to limb, so must the personal character, thought, purpose and life of the living Christ be brought into touch with receptive souls. Jesus takes the high ground with reference to the inspired Scriptures which He has also taken with reference to other sacred objects, viz. : the temple and the Sabbath.

You call the temple sacred and the altar a heavenly shrine? In what does their sanctity consist? There is One greater than the temple and only so far forth as the sacred structure fulfills its mission in expressing the presence of the greater One has it any sanctity. There is one Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is not an end in itself but is of worth only as it gives evidence of the paramount claims of Him Who is its Lord. So of the Scriptures. They are not sacred in themselves except as they testify of Christ. The bare possession of the written word, the prolonged examination of its mere letter, neither nor both is the condition of eternal life. The study of the Scriptures which is stimulated by the vague idea that it is religion, or that it has life, or can give life, is illusive. We may think that in them we have eternal life, but our Lord would undeceive us. The Scriptures are not religion, nor do they contain religion any more than a captain's chart is navigation, or contains the knowledge of navigation, or a book of tactics contains warfare, or a knowledge of warfare, or a government treatise on the rotation of crops contains agriculture or a knowledge of farming. The Scriptures are a description of religion. They are a testimony to the personal Christ. The Scriptures are not *the truth*. Jesus Christ is *the truth*. No book, no church, no priesthood, nor ritual, nor creed, nor mode of worship may diminish by one hair's breadth the immediacy of personal contact of the human heart with the living personal Christ. When Jesus Christ lays hold of a man so that the spirit of Christ becomes the determinative energy of his life, that man is Christian and nothing else nor many things combined can make him Christian.

"He that hath the Son hath life". "If the Son make you free ye shall be free indeed". This is all there is to it—the personal relation with the personal Christ. Christ is the one thing in the Christian life. The genius of this experience called Christian is being wrought into Him. There is only one thing which so connects a branch of the vine with the vine as to make



it a branch, and that is the life of the vine which makes itself felt in the branch. There is only one thing which involves a limb in the body so as to make it a member of that organic thing called the body and that is the life of the body which courses through it. In the same way there is only one thing which makes a man Christian and that is his vital contact with Christ so that the thought of Christ shall inspire his mind, the love of Christ move his heart, the purpose of Christ gird his will, the law of Christ confirm his conscience. The weakness of Christianity is that we make it complex and composite, and of our own conceits forge the chains which hold us in tether.

Life is the thing. This simple fact is the whole of it. We make it consist of many things added together instead of one simple, omnipotent, supreme fact. We have heard so much about conviction and sentiment, about doctrines and ceremonies that we have come to consider Christianity as a matter of opinion, or of feeling, but Christianity is simply and solely a matter of divine life in the human soul, and there is no matter of dogma, or sentiment, or ceremony about it. Life is the thing. When divinely alive we may find our emancipation and leave the burden of philosophy, the thralldom of tradition, the shackles of superstition, the galvanism of emotion, for *we live*. We may refuse to be satisfied with anything religious unless we realize the life-giving touch of the Son of God. No picture of the sun can illumine a landscape; no richly colored wax or folded paper can make a flower bed. We may have our sunbeams hot from the sky and the fragrance and beauty of life be the flowering of the indwelling spirit of Him Who is the life. When once this central truth is grasped it will go with us all the way and lead us out of the tangles.

First of all, *in the problems of conduct*. Jesus Christ the teacher, taught conduct, character, life, duty,—“By their fruits ye shall know them” was His criterion of judgment as to behavior. “He that heareth My sayings and doeth them” is the man whom He approved. The final tests in the adjudication of destiny are ethical tests as seen in Matt. 25.—“Inasmuch as ye did it—fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick and the like, you may stand at the right hand of God in the judgment”. The problem of the ethics of the New Testament is the kind of character illustrated in the life of Jesus, and the first problem evident at the outset is the application of this ideal of life to conduct and character.

He who accepts Jesus as the truth will follow His lead in the Scripture, not studying the doctrines of the New Testament, not studying the theology of the New Testament, not studying Christology. Nor will he be a New Testament critic studying the books. These problems are behind and beyond. No! he will take the New Testament as it lies before him and the one question before him will be what is the character exemplified and taught? What is the Christian character? What sort of person is built on the New Testament teaching? These studies are preliminary, introductory. The subjects are near and obvious; they open the way to the remote. The first thing in the New Testament is the appeal to life, conduct and character.

The path to what is beyond lies through the investigation of the near. Here is a method of approach which reverses the common method which always begins with the remote, the obscure. Study the familiar hand-books of Christian ethics, *e. g.*, Dorner or Martensen. They begin with the speculative. The opening chapters are purely theological, metaphysical, and have nothing to do with conduct and character. The whole discussion is of the nature of God, then descends into the realm of conduct and lays down such rules of conduct as are deducible from theological tenets; but with Jesus as teacher we take the other method of procedure. First the simple, the near, the practical, the personal, then the greater visions of what lies beyond. First ethics, then theology; first life, then truth; first the example of Christ, then the person of Christ; first the interpretation of Christ, then the knowledge of Christ. "He who will do the will of God shall know". The approach to the New Testament through the path of ethics is distinguished from the usual treatment and more consistent with the New Testament itself. The theology of the future is not prerequisite to the understanding of the character of Jesus, but the very reverse. The character and life of Jesus are fundamental to the theology of the future. Look at the ethics of Jesus for a moment. In announcing His morality Jesus took three departures from other systems: Mosaic, Pharisaic, Græco-Roman. These were the three moral systems of His time, the systems respectively of His ancestral religion, the then principal sect, and that of the outside world. Every utterance of Jesus bearing on morals was spoken in contemplation of one or the other of these classes. In departing from the Mosaic system He sought to develop morality from its primitive rudeness and simplicity. In departing from the Pharisaic system He sought to recall it from the ritualistic divergence to the proper subjects of morality, and in departing from the Græco-Roman He sought to substitute the tender for the heroic virtue.

His object, therefore, as viewed from these three points of departure was respectfully to fulfil, to correct and to supplant, or to affect an extension, a reformation and a revolution. The ethical classifications in the teachings of Jesus become clear when we understand His point of view.

Jesus was infinitely patient toward some sins, but was terrifically severe with the Pharisees. His estimate of the Pharisee and the Publican was a subversion of all accepted standards of conduct. Jesus Christ wanted to find one initial quality which the sinner might hold, and the typical Pharisee lacked, namely,—docility, receptivity; not the quality of wrong-doing in a life, but the quality of self-sufficiency was the great hindrance to goodness, the state of mind which knows no lack and is not open to modifications. His commendation of another type—the child—is evidence of His estimate of the worth of teachableness.

*Childlikeness* is this initial trait. It is not afflicted with self-sufficiency. The chief obstacle to the Christian religion is *satiety*. This is *hopeless*. How can we offer a feast when a man has fed? Hunger, thirst, craving, openness; these are the qualities of mind on which Jesus lays emphasis. It is not the sins of the flesh against which He inveighs, or the sins of the spirit. It is

the condition of being surfeited and therefore unteachable. Given teachableness, then His faith is in moral *growth*. He does not say that this is a good man and that man is bad, but this man is moving toward an end, there is hope of him. His movements are dynamic, evolutionary. Jesus always looked for this openness toward growth. Consider, for example, His treatment of Peter. Jesus saw in him something teachable. This explains His continued faith in Judas. He hoped for him; there was something in him to make Him believe in growth. He had not lost faith in him. Add to openness of mind the principle of growth and you have the ground-work and the standards of Jesus' ethics. Now compare the text-books on Christian morals and make the contrast with the Gospel teaching in their mode of approach. Dörner's system of Christian ethics so highly systematized is all an inference from theology instead of as in the New Testament where ethics is propædæutic to theology. As one of my teachers has said, "This process is like drawing the fire down instead of lighting it on the ground. The draught is the wrong way, and we cannot see because of the smoke". In the Gospel we trace the path of Jesus in His steps; we listen to Jesus and hear Him talk about conduct and character. To follow His simple, elemental, inductive method of study takes us away from classification. We go through life, not as the professional botanist, to pluck, dry, classify, put away in a drawer, label, and perhaps exhibit the selected specimens of conduct. We go rather as a nature lover who walks through the fields and watches the lilies as they grow. Jesus is not a system maker, but an observer with the highest qualities of insight. He watches the people as they act. His ethics are based on the principles of growth; He deals not with character as it is, but with character as it may be. He considers the issue, like a bulb planted in winter. He discerns the possibility of beauty in the spring. This is why the nethermost sins are not hopeless from the point of view of Jesus. States of mind interest Him. If the roots are dead there is no hope. So the Pharisee and the Publican in ordinary estimates were clearly distinguishable. So are the rose and the daisy. From all appearances and by ordinary standards of value the rose is to be preferred, but the great question is what will happen next spring? Jesus looking on the Publican saw in him promise and possibility and knew that he would come to something, but the Pharisee was dead at the root. What hope is there in the character? This is the question. Is there to come something from the unpromising stem which will justify keeping it? If not, cut it off. "To be carnally minded is death, to be spiritually minded is life". Here is the promise of *growth*. So with the lead of Jesus we are able to get at the real in *character* and find emancipation from the bondage of ordinary classifications of conduct in the discovery of that which is vital.

*Secondly. In the problems of doctrine.* The history of religion plainly reveals a tendency toward elaboration. In the process there is an inevitable loss of some of the elements of original character. A change of base is not a change for the better. Religions deteriorate; they lose their finer ingredients. The average Mahometan today is not nearly so good a man as



Mahomet was. Judaism in the time of Christ was very different from the Judaism of Moses. It is equally true of Christianity. The truth which Christ declared is obscured in tradition; the life which He emphasized is lost in dogmatic systems. The most hopeful religious movement today is the determined effort to get back to Christ, to unload the superfluous baggage of theological dogma, to set back the roots of all Christian growth into the original soil of the real life of God. It is a reaction from the external to the internal, from the accidental to the essential. Back and up the stream of religious life the earnest souls of this latest of the centuries are pressing their way in order that they may trace the current to the fountain head and discover a clear stream. The longest dogmatic systems are the atest. The Romish Church has continued the elaboration of its articles of faith through fourteen centuries, adding the last in 1870. We have to go back for brevity. The thirty-nine articles in the Westminster Confession are more brief than the Catholic creed. The creed of Athanasius is shorter still, the Nicene creed less elaborate. The nearer the source the simpler the statements. The Apostolic creed is the simplest of all, but the pure river of the water of life is today being traced back to the very altars of God where the stream issues forth clear as crystal uncontaminated by the findings of Augsburg, Trent, Chalcedon or Nicea, back to the New Testament itself in which are the pure springs—there to find the personal Christ.

“ Hushed be the noise and the strife of the schools,  
Volume and pamphlet, sermon and speech,  
The lips of the wise and the prattle of fools,  
Let the Son of Man teach !

“ Who has the key of the future but He ?  
Who can unravel the knots of the skein ?  
We have groaned and have travailed and sought to be free,  
We have travailed in vain.

“ Bewildered, dejected, and prone to despair,  
To Him as at first do we turn and beseech,  
Our ears are all open ! Give heed to our prayer !  
O Son of Man teach ! ”

The essentials of religion as defined by Paul who received his illumination from the personal Christ are but two,—a person and a fact, Jesus and the resurrection. Peter's succinct statement, the summary of which he had learned after seven months with Jesus in northern Galilee was: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”. And the final word of John reveals the heart of the matter—“He that hath the Son hath life”. In the atmosphere of the New Testament there is the emphasis of life. The councils of the centuries have been elaborating definitions, determining theories, settling opinions, and have wrapped themselves round in the shackles of paralyzing discussion.

Take up any system where you will. They have nothing to do with character or conduct. They are metaphysical, not ethical. They discuss the relation of the three persons in the trinity; the relation of the divine and human natures in the person of Jesus; the relation of the sacrifice of Jesus

to the divine law; the relation of the will of man to the will of God; the mysterious nature of the sacraments and many such like things they discuss. Doubtless these ought they to have done but not to have left the other undone. One breathes another atmosphere in the teachings of Jesus. He speaks of a Father's love and care; His beneficent providence; the freedom from care which comes from trust in that love; the obligation of children to be like their Father; the importance of unselfish service; the excellence of the tender virtues; the estimate of the inner quality of life as compared with the merely external and formal. This is not theory nor theology. It is life. As Henry Van Dyke has said: "Theology is not religion for the same reason that biology is not life". Wherever there is this conception of what is vital in religion in the actual contact with the living Christ there is life real, throbbing, essential. This emphasis of the essentials has found expression lately in the chapel at Brighton where the eloquent Robertson preached. There has been placed a memorial in the form of Hoffman's "Christ Among the Doctors of the Law", and as expressing the attitude of mind of their beloved preacher, the givers of the tablet have inscribed the legend—"They were thinking about theology, he was thinking about God".

*Thirdly. In the problems of worship.* The tendency toward elaboration is as apparent in forms of worship and methods of organization until sometimes it is difficult to discover the earnest, simple activities of the church of the apostles amid the elaborate ritual and complex ceremony of today. The unselfish ministrations of the apostolic church has been displaced by the selfish administration of the church of the later centuries. We have to go back for simplicity. The methods that have gradually come into use through the centuries have obscured the simple ways of the apostles. The emphasis of the church as an organization has given rise to an elaboration of ritual, an enrichment of ceremony which makes the church appear as an end in itself. Ecclesiastical form is thought to express the whole content of religion and in the thought of the church as an organization is lost the more Christly thought of the church as an organism. Simplicity is fundamental to all religious life.

In recent explorations in Egypt it is recorded that Cailliaud found some excavations in a mountain which on entering proved to be emerald mines apparently unvisited since the times of the Ptolemies. There at the entrance lay the lamps and the tools with which the ancient miners had worked appealing with silent eloquence for other hands to take them up and dig for new treasures which lay in costly profusion all around, and with the old instruments these new workmen in the latest of the centuries dug out the emerald gems.

The apostolic church, fresh from the hands of the Holy Ghost had four great characteristics,—love of truth, love of one another, frequent remembrance of Christ, and immediate connection with Him in prayer. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers. There are some things in the church more

important than exactness of ordinances, or ornateness of worship, and one of them is the divine breath.

A work among the mariners is carried on in New York harbor by the Episcopal City Mission. The missionary was asked by an ecclesiastical purist whether his church were high or low. He replied, "It depends upon the tide". There were some simple, great matters which inspired the consecrated disciples in the first century and they engaged in a manifold ministry, a ministry of life as penetrating as human need, as comprehensive as divine love.

You will remember John Stuart Blackie's confession of faith. It has the true ring.

"Creeds and confessions? High church or low?  
 I cannot say; but you would vastly please us  
 If with some pointed Scripture you could show  
 To which of these belonged the Saviour Jesus.  
 I think to all or none. Not curious creeds,  
 Or ordered forms of churchly rule He taught,  
 But soul of love that blossomed into deeds  
 With human good and human blessing fraught.  
 On me nor priest, nor presbyter, nor pope,  
 Bishop nor dean, may stamp a party name.  
 But Jesus with His largely human scope  
 The service of my human life may claim.  
 Let prideful priests do battle about creeds  
 The church is mine that does most Christ-like deeds".

That church has the most divinity in it which does the most for humanity. Humanity wants life, not theories about life. The church that will save a world must be divinely alive. It will not be a rich church nor a poor church, liturgical or non-liturgical. Life consists not in ornateness nor plainness, "Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature". Such a church will subordinate tradition to truth, will insist that even Augustine and Calvin shall yield the throne to Jesus, will insist that councils, creeds, priests and fathers combined shall not in the least diminish the immediacy of the pressure of the very words of Christ or divert the permanent and paramount authoritativeness of His word. Such a church will keep the conscience of Christendom face to face and eye to eye with our Lord, will provide an exhilarating atmosphere for Christian activity and impart nerve to Christian enterprise. Such a church will emancipate the thought of God's people from entanglements and complications by its constant fealty to the personal and vital elements of Christian truth. To the member of such a church Christ will be the one thing in the Christian life. He will know Christ as a personal force. Christ will energize him, inspire him, be the motive of all he does. He will yield to Christ exact, absolute and prompt obedience. He will be in vital touch with Christ by virtue of his own personal faith. To him Christ is the vine of which he is a branch and all his Christian experiences are a matter of being wrought into Christ, for Christ and Christ's spirit are the determinative energies of his life. This is the church for which the world is waiting. This is the



simple vital truth which humanity craves. The ordinary mind with difficulty understands the elaborate systems of doctrine which the centuries have perfected, nor can it appreciate the elaborate cults of worship which are maintained in the name of religion; but the people know the life of Jesus when they see it, and in Him Christianity consists not of many things combined, but one thing.

Once in immediate contact with Jesus Christ, the seeker for truth is not confused with complicated questions of convictions or conduct. These are incident, not essence. Life is the essential thing. Where there is life there will be fruit. Life will surely manifest itself. The Christianity of Christ is not a system of doctrine, nor a form of worship, nor a code of morals, but divine life in the human soul.

To be sure, the Christ-filled man will think deeply and accurately; he will also behave well, but neither opinion nor behavior, neither creed nor covenant constitute the essence of Christian experience. *Life is the thing.* Let the truth as it is in Jesus be accepted in its simplicity and its entirety and the world's emancipation is achieved. He did not formulate a definite series of the necessary articles of faith, nor did He summarize the things which it is essential to believe. Such a statement is not essential to the religion of Jesus. He did not insist upon certain forms of worship. "God is a spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth"; not in Gerizim, nor in Jerusalem is the place to worship, but wherever and whenever the reverent soul lifts itself to God.

He did not fix a hierarchy of virtues and classify actions by any set and fixed ethical standards. He seemed quite willing that the opinions of His disciples should be flexible so long as their faith was firm and their life eternal. He seemed to have anticipated the subtle temptation which has overtaken the Christian disciple in all ages to emphasize the intellectual element in the religious life on the one hand, or the external on the other, and so He taught, explained, and reiterated that life was paramount and precedent. He led His disciples to larger views of intellectual freedom and responsibility. He bade them see that in the nature of the case opinion is to life what letter is to spirit, what scaffold is to structure. The words which He spake unto them, they were spirit, they were life. In the classical passage (John 4) he teaches clearly that worship depends upon a true conception of God, that it must be spiritual as opposed to sensuous, that it must be in truth, dealing with reality, giving adequate and veracious expression to genuine desire and veritable emotions.

In the public worship which will accord with these simple principles the *Praise* will not be rendered perfunctorily by certain lay figures arrayed in the latest achievements of the dressmaker's art, conspicuously exposed to the gaze of the curious, nor will it be the pyrotechnical vocalizations of certain musical prodigies whose delight is in the law of the echo. It will rather be the spontaneous expression of real emotion, gratitude, joy, reverence—praise in which every worshipper will participate and pour out his soul in exultant song.

The *Prayer* will not be an elocutionary discourse which brings the worshipper into communion with him who prays ; it will rather be the voice of the heart, as natural an outbreathing as when the flowers swing their censers in the temple of the morning.

The *Preaching* will present *God*, not the preacher ; will awaken the conscience, not tickle the itching ear ; will ennoble and enrich the life of the hearer till he will feel that his minister is the minister of Christ by whose hand he has the gift of life and has that life more abundantly.

*Fourthly. In the problems of social service.* Who shall give humanity the life and liberty it craves ? This opportunity belongs to the church of the living God. What is the New Testament idea of the church ? It is the body of Christ, the reincarnation of the Son of God, the incarnation of the Holy Ghost. As such she must express in her conduct, her doctrine, her worship, her service the spirit which animates her. Christ must be the source of her life, Christ the body of truth which she teaches, Christ the source of her power. There is only one simple fact which constitutes the organism called church, namely, her living relation to Christ. There is no church except as the members of the organism are livingly knit into Him. The church is organism, not mechanism.

In the deepest sense, therefore, the church may embody the truth which will give humanity the liberty and life it craves. She may demonstrate that God localizes Himself in her. She may be the organ of the life of God. For this church the world waits. Humanity wants life, the touch of omnipotence, contact with God. The church of the living Christ today may be the embodiment of divine love, wisdom and power. She may work in the world as distinct amid the organizations of the time as the life of Abraham was amid the materialistic civilization of the Mesopotamian Valley, as distinct as the life of Enoch, who walked with God, who worked and worshipped in a spiritual temple invisible yet real and eternal. While other men build theologies, settle definitions, elaborate theories and try by multiplied and complex agencies to affect the life of men, the church may triumph as Elijah on Carmel, or Peter at Pentecost, who linked their activities to the dynamics of the skies and were personally moved by the omnipotent energies of God.

Such a church may conquer mountainous difficulties, expel insistent and rebellious evil, solve vexed and intricate problems, and bring in a new heaven and a new earth. Herself delivered from the bondage of the letter, and tradition, and form, having found the emancipation of spirit and life, she can deliver humanity from the bondage of sin and death. The social evangel of Jesus was spirit and life. He began with life at its sources. His salvation of society, like salvation of the soul, was to save the body through the soul. His methods in redemption were, therefore, vital, not mechanical. He would transform the soul of mankind and so change the civilization in which they live. Only the life of Christ can raise civilization from the dead. The efficiency of Christ's method has been vindicated through 2000 years of history. Yet it is astonishing how difficult it is to get it practically

accepted by the social workers of to-day. The external method is so plausible, so bewitching, so easy. There never was a time when some reformer was not ready to suggest some Medea's bath, some Merlin's charm, or, with Carlisle, some Morison's pill which can cure all the ills of the race. The shores of the social sea are strewn with the wrecks of these futile and mechanical attempts at changing the condition of men. It is less expensive just to put a face on things. Some people are yet misled by the error that the shell can form the organism, or the feathers grow the bird. There are yet advocates of the theory that environment makes the man; there are yet reveries of sentiment and romance about the New Jerusalem builded with jewels and paved with gold, and Jesus yet weeps over the city and society because the people will not let Him build their Jerusalem for them. These methods and agencies leave the essential difficulty of the problem untouched.

Only the truth as it is in Jesus can make men free. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death". We must bring to bear upon dilapidated and disabled souls the quickening breath of the divine life and so awaken them to the appreciation of that better life which they may have abundantly.

To be sure, men will say they are not dead as the Pharisees declared they had "never been in bondage to any man", yet there was Egypt and Babylon in their history, and the Roman eagles were visible in the temple, flaunting their wings in the castle. Men are as ingenious as they in ignoring the disagreeable facts which blind so many to their fetters. Sin's fetters are riveted when the bondsman lifts his manacled hand and protests his freedom, but slavery is not an affair of political or social arrangement. It is a condition of the spirit. Death is not physical collapse, but separation from God. Real bondage is that which enslaves the will and prevents doing right. "Whoso committeth sin is the servant of sin". The most real servitude and the only terrible death is that perverted condition of soul in which the better nature is incapable of casting off the chains woven by its own acts, and in trying to do so throws aside the restraints of virtue only to be bound the more tightly by the heavier fetters of vice. This deeper human need is revealed as by a lightning flash in the words of John (1 John 5 : 12) and the words of Jesus illumine the path into the larger liberty of the sons of God.

"He that hath the Son hath life"—"If the Son make you free you shall be free indeed".



## \* THE HOME AT BETHANY AND THE FRIENDSHIPS OF JESUS.

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Friendship, as an influence in Christ's life, was neither trivial nor incidental. If it be true that a man is known by his friends, it may be said with perfect reverence that the character of Jesus, in its human relations, can be interpreted in the light of His friendships. Apart, therefore, from their historical interest, the friendships of Christ have a definite psychological value. In ways most suggestive and illuminating they interpret certain fundamental qualities in His nature, without which, indeed, His humanity would be incomplete. On the one hand, for example, they reflect Christ's *capacity for creating friendship*, a certain sympathetic power of drawing men and women to Himself on the basis of loving intimacy. On the other hand, they reveal the *need of friendship* itself as a feature of His nature, a craving of His heart which demanded the sympathy and love of kindred souls for its expression.

But more than that, in addition to this historical and psychological interest, the friendships of Jesus must be studied in the light of their spiritual and experimental value. Nothing would be more inadequate than to think of these friendships as merely reminiscences of His human life on earth. They are, in fact, the pledge of His continuous presence in the experience of His people. They are the historical type of that mystical communion which the believer enjoys as the supreme achievement of faith. The friendship of Jesus, mediated through the Holy Spirit, is the dynamic in the Christian consciousness. There is no simpler, yet more profound definition of Christianity as a spiritual influence in the soul than in these three words, "Friendship with Jesus". In these words lies the secret of the divine life in man, transfiguring character and inspiring conduct. "Henceforth I call you not servants but friends."

The Christian life, it may be said, passes through three distinct stages—that of the bond-servant, where the radical motive is compulsion through fear; that of the hireling, where the controlling elements are duty and reward, and finally that of the friend, where spiritual experience has resolved itself into personal fusion with Christ, in which the dominant influence is love expressing itself in passionate devotion.

That is the flower of Christ's friendship. To that high destiny He sought to lift every man who felt the touch of His spirit. Very beautifully is that spiritual aspect of His friendship brought out in that verse in St. Mark's Gospel which records the calling of the twelve. In Mark 3:14 we

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read, "And He appointed twelve that they might be with Him". A world of spiritual suggestion lies in that preposition "with". Primarily he chose these twelve men, not to cast out devils or preach the gospel or baptize. Back of all these things was this fundamental condition: He chose them "that they might be with Him". Fellowship with Christ must antedate service for Christ. Our friendship with the Master is the secret of our activity for the Master. To know this atmosphere of personal communion with Him is the highest culture of which the soul is capable. Friendship, the reservoir of service; lacking that, service becomes drudgery and duty sordid.

It is a frequent criticism of Christian ethics that the New Testament is singularly reticent on the subject of friendship. While it is specific enough as to duties of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, on the claims and duties of friendship, the New Testament, it is often asserted, has no word to say. While Pagan thought found its noblest utterances in its glowing apostrophes to friendship, Christian literature on the other hand, in and out of the canon, has nothing that can compare with the great classics on this theme. Jeremy Taylor, indeed, amongst the Puritans, has a charming essay on the "Pleasures and Offices of Friendship",—next to his book on "Holy Living and Dying", his best piece of writing,—but even Jeremy Taylor, writing from the Christian point of view, draws his most effective illustrations from the classic authors of Greece and Rome.

But the assertion that the New Testament has nothing to say on the pleasures and offices of friendship is only partially true. What it omits to say by precept or aphorism, the New Testament does convincingly by suggestion and example. If the word friendship occurs only once in the New Testament, and then only as a term of condemnation, the atmosphere of friendship in its highest and purest sense pervades the book like the aroma of Mary's ointment. The new commandment is the charter of Christian friendship. That we love one another as He loved us is to be the measure of our spiritual kinship with all men, and from the passion of that divine love, Christian friendship draws its inspiration.

The home at Bethany was the geographical center of the friendships of Jesus. To the Fourth Gospel we owe an imperishable debt of gratitude for that exquisite chapter in the Saviour's life. Bethany, lying peacefully amidst the uplands of Judea amongst the vine-clad hills, and shadowed by its spreading date palms, was the Elim in Christ's life, the quiet resting place towards which in His weariest days He turned His feet, not doubting the welcome of love which awaited Him there. Bethany brought the touch of home to a homeless man. Over that village home there rests for the Christian an almost idyllic light, peaceful, restful, like that of the early morning before the birds are awake. With its tender memories it enshrined the holy human sympathy of Jesus. His place in every home is made secure by His presence in that simple household, a presence that consecrates the family and makes the humblest home a sanctuary. His love for man is made intense and personal by His love for Martha and Mary

and Lazarus—Mary, “whose eyes were homes of silent prayer”; Martha, whose heart was burdened down with care, and Lazarus, whose vision pierced the night of death.

As one studies Christ's relations in that Bethany home, one becomes conscious of a *fourfold manifestation* of His friendship with those whose intimacy with Him had ripened into mutual confidence and love.

First, we see Christ there as the *genial* friend, when, with a touch of half playful humor He rebuked, if one may use a word so strong, the anxious worriment of Martha, busy with her household cares. To Luke we owe that charming glimpse of the contrasted temperament of the two sisters, amplified by John under different circumstances.

Second, we see Him as the *sympathetic* friend, when in the hour of their great affliction He comes to them and mingled His tears with theirs at the grave of Lazarus.

Third, we behold Him as the *divine friend*, when with voice of divine authority He declared Himself the Resurrection and the Life and commanded Lazarus to come forth.

Fourthly, we witness in Jesus the *grateful* friend, when with imperishable words of gratitude He acknowledged Mary's act of devotion in breaking over Him the precious spikenard and vindicated her love for all time in the face of the vulgar criticisms of Judas and his associates.

These then were at least four distinctive notes in the friendship of Jesus as it unfolded in the home at Bethany; geniality, sympathy, gratitude and divine helpfulness from the shadow of death. Combine these qualities and they reveal the intense and beautiful humanness of Christ's relations with those He loved. His was a friendship that invited confidence and disarmed fear. Take, for example, Martha's approach to Him (recorded by St. Luke), when in a moment of petulance she appealed to Him to send Mary back to her household duties instead of monopolizing the Master's attention. The strong aorist verb, meaning literally “coming up suddenly” to Him, betrays not merely a touch of temper on Martha's part, but a certain familiarity of approach which is suggestive of the intimacy which existed between Christ and these two sisters. And it is in the light of that unconstrained confidence that we are able to appreciate the geniality of Christ's reply. It is hardly fair to call it a rebuke. It is rather the half bantering response of one who, recognizing the anxious hospitality of a generous hostess, seeks to relieve her anxiety, while at the same time defending the more spiritually-minded Mary who sat at His feet.

But most beautifully this mark of utter confidence in His sympathy was shown by these sisters in the message they sent to Jesus when Lazarus fell ill. “Him whom Thou lovest is sick”. That is all. The message contained no request. It was enough, these grief-stricken sisters felt, to tell the Master that His friend was sick. Friendship has no higher mark than that. The silence, the reserves of a true friendship are more eloquent than its speech. The language of the heart in the hour of its necessity fills up the gaps of the broken speech, and what the lips cannot articulate, love interprets and love fulfils.



It is not without significance that the friendship of Jesus towards the household at Bethany found its highest expression in the hour of a great sorrow and through a great self-sacrifice. The eleventh chapter of John is a life-commentary on the exceeding preciousness of Christ's presence in the last and saddest moments of experience. To that grief-shadowed home He came, even though He knew His coming meant the hastening of His own death, as it proved, and forgetful of self, forgetful for the moment even of His own power over death, He bowed His head in tears so deep, so intense that those standing near could not but exclaim, "Behold how He loved him". Never, save on the cross, were the human and the divine in Christ so sharply contrasted, and yet too, never so matchlessly blended as when, one moment weeping in sympathy by the grave, the next moment He said: "Lazarus, come forth". Than that act of bringing back life from the tomb, friendship could only go one step further, the laying down of His own life for His friends. And that coronation of friendship Jesus reached on the cross.

Turning now for a few moments to Christ's friendships with His disciples, one is impressed at once by their variety. The friendships of Jesus were not temperamental. They were not limited by the presence or absence of certain qualities in those He invited to His intimacy. How various and contrasted for example, were the types of character represented in these twelve men,—the choleric Peter, the melancholic John, the phlegmatic Andrew, the cautious Thomas, the secretive Judas; in each and all of these men there was some distinct quality that called out the Master's love. It is indeed a significant fact, that while John was the beloved disciple who most deeply had caught the secret of Christ's love, Judas was the only one of the twelve whom Christ ever addressed as "Friend". In that moment of betrayal in the garden, as though in that last moment He sought to stay the traitor's kiss, the last pleading of the Master's love and the final appeal to the holy memories of the past could find no deeper expression than this, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" It was, as has been said, the last pleading of love, the appeal of a friendship that to the very end sought to restrain the treacherous hands that destroyed it.

What then was the basis of this friendship of Christ? What was the supreme condition of entrance into this holy fellowship? The answer to that question is found in the fifteenth chapter of John. If the eleventh chapter, with its exquisite picture of the Bethany home is the historical record of His friendship, the fifteenth chapter with its beautiful parable of the vine and the branches is the spiritual record of His friendship. Picture for a moment the scene. The fourteenth chapter ends with the words spoken in the upper room, "Arise, let us go hence". Immediately after the fifteenth chapter begins with the memorable words, "I am the true vine". What is the point of connection? As Christ arose with the eleven disciples and stepped out on the stairway leading down to the silent road, bathed that Passover night in the radiance of the paschal moon, His eye would naturally rest on the richly clustered vine that climbed against the wall of the house. Instantly it gave the key to the thoughts of His heart. He was

about to leave those men. Never again could the conditions of intercourse be precisely the same as in these years in which they had sojourned together. But the love, the intimacy, the confidence was to be the same. How then could He make clear to them that though separated in the flesh their kinship was not to lessen, but to deepen in the years to come? And the vine, growing there before them as they stepped out into the silent Passover night, supplied the thought. As the vine drew its life from the root buried out of sight, and as the branches brought forth their fruit through the unseen currents of life which flowed from that hidden root, so henceforth their life in Him and His friendship with them would be realized by their spiritual communion with an unseen friend. So the great words were spoken, "Abide in Me; henceforth I call you not servants but friends". That word "henceforth" marked a cleavage line in their spiritual history. On one side "servants"; on the other side "friends". Strange, surely, that not till the night of His leaving them, when, according to human standards friendship was to end, He admitted these eleven men to the high intimacy of friendship. Now what was the condition of entrance into this richer experience? How were they to cross over the "henceforth" from servitude to friendship? The condition was *obedience*. Mystical in its character, this higher friendship was to be supremely practical in its realization. The ethical condition of obedience was emphatic. Here, indeed, we touch one of the most suggestive features in the Fourth Gospel. I sometimes think that a great work has yet to be written on the ethics of St. John. The most spiritual of all the evangelists, the ethical note of his Gospel is as clear as the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount. This is especially true of St. John's doctrine of obedience. In John's Gospel, obedience has a threefold influence, first as the condition of intellectual illumination; second, as the condition of spiritual communion, and third, as the condition of peace of soul. "If any man will do the will, he shall know the doctrine, whether it be of God",—obedience as the organ of intellectual illumination. "Ye are My friends if you do whatsoever I command you",—obedience as the organ of spiritual communion. "If ye know these things, happy (blessed) are ye if ye do them,—obedience the organ of blessedness and peace of soul.

Through that obedience, the friendship of Christ as a spiritual experience was intended to produce a threefold blessing. First, transformation of motive in service; second, revelation of purpose in discipline; and third, assimilation of character through fellowship. These are the three distinctive marks of that deeper life of fellowship to which on the eve of His departure He admitted His disciples. First, *transformation of motive in service*. The motive of service in the slave or bond-servant is either fear or reward; the motive in the friend is co-operative love. The friend anticipates his master's word and rejoices in doing his master's will. Friendship is the transfiguration of service; the creation of a new motive; redeeming life from its drudgery, and sending the pulse-beat of joy into the most trivial task.

Secondly, friendship in this spiritual interpretation, is the *revelation of purpose in discipline*. "I call you friends" said Jesus, "for all things that I

have heard of My Father I make known to you". The slave works in ignorance of his master's purpose. "His not to reason why, his but to do or die". But it is the privilege of friendship to share its plans, and to the friends of Jesus there is given a constant unfolding of His purposes for them and through them. Through all the web and woof of experience, the friend of Jesus can trace the golden threads which reveal the pattern of the Father's love. So suffering and sorrow became transfigured through the revelation of a divine purpose in life, and submission to the divine will becomes the soul's deepest joy.

Lastly, the friendship of Jesus as a spiritual communion, brings with it *assimilation of character through daily fellowship*. The servant may grow in faithfulness and sympathy with his master, but friendship, as an intimacy of soul, brings with it, as its supreme blessing, the ever deepening assimilation of life and character into the likeness of the Master himself. And that is the coronation of the Friendship of Jesus.



\*THE CROSS THE WORLD'S EVANGEL,  
OR THE CHRISTIAN LAW OF SACRIFICE IN RELATION TO MISSIONS.

(ST. JOHN 12:20-32.)

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*The Occasion.*—It is the third day of Passion Week; it is the last day of our Lord's public ministry to His own people Israel,—the day on which "He departed and hid Himself from them". He had come "unto His own, and His own received Him not". Because the house of Israel knew not the day of her visitation, she was left to herself desolate.

Just at this juncture an event of great significance occurs. Among the multitude of those who had come up to the Feast of the Passover were many Gentile proselytes to the Jewish faith, who at least half believed that Jesus was "the desire of all nations". Among these were certain Greeks who wished to see Jesus. He had just made His royal entry into Jerusalem, and His name was on all tongues; they must not miss the opportunity of personal audience with One to Whom the hosannas had been sung. The announcement of this visit fell on the spirit of Jesus in a psychic hour, and it was the harbinger of a new epoch of universal evangelization.

Such a visit must have presented to Jesus a strong temptation. The whole Roman empire was about to open to apostolic approach; the coming Europe would be a theatre for its operation. Britain would be His to exploit, the new world His to pre-empt.

His vision, sweeping across all the oceans, embraced Japan, China, India, Africa, and all the Islands of the sea, waiting for His coming. The prospect was such as never greeted statesman or world-conqueror before.

But fascinating as was this prospect, it was not His to realize in a personal, earthly career. A great summer with teeming harvest awaiting other reapers than Himself, was ahead, but for Him—winter, death, the death of the cross intervened. Even as these new Magi knocked at the door, that cross loomed high on the horizon. Without pausing even to give answer to the uncommon request, His reply was instant: "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit". Not that Jesus did not appreciate the appearance of this new day-star upon His dark horizon, nor that He did not value the wealth of waiting harvests which the day would ripen: He simply put them away for the present. Just now He is putting first things first; the atonement must be wrought; that conditions everything. That

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which lay in the Father's will as something eternally conceived, but now historically to be accomplished, was of supreme moment. So Jesus drops all other prizes that tempt His imagination, and in one cry of complete abandon He breaks forth, "Father, glorify Thy name". It is the most consummate self-surrender in all history.

It is significant that the particular moment when Jesus so gave Himself up to His cross, should have been precisely that at which these Greeks came. Up to this time, Christ had magnified His errand as "unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel", but now, since its odor is to fill the world, the alabaster box which contained the precious nard must be broken. The enmity of the Jews was pressing Him up to the Roman cross, but the Father's will working within Him was also constraining Him to His voluntary self-sacrifice. All middle walls of partition, as between Jew and Gentile, must now be broken down; Christianity must become catholicised. Christ's foot was upon the border of a yielding world; but before He can advance an inch He must turn away to die. It was bitter, but it was saving, as it was loyal to every moral reality. Such was the occasion.

*Aspects of Sacrifice.* We are now brought to the consideration of the offering itself, in behalf of the world, which the unique death of Jesus constituted. It is the law which underlies this death, commonly called "the law of sacrifice", which we now study. We shall consider this law in two aspects:—

First, as the atoning offering of Christ in behalf of the world, and second, as the archetype of Christian self-sacrifice in behalf of others.

## I.

And first, let us consider that objective offering which Christ made of Himself for the redemption of the world. In the expression in v. 24, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die", all this is implied; but in v. 31 Jesus reiterates the principle in language most unequivocal, as setting forth the character and bearing of the death He died. He exclaims, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself". The plain meaning of the two passages just quoted will compel us to conclude that the sacrifice of Christ in behalf of the world was a *judgment-death*. But before defining in what respects this is so, some preliminary considerations are needful, in order to a clear understanding of terms.

*The Scripture-Term Judgment.* The meaning of this term "judgment" has been grossly misconceived, and, in consequence, the most unhappy revolt against its use exists in the modern mind. By many the term has been regarded as synonymous with a sentence of reprobation or damnation. But this is due to an oversight of certain additional and very different and gracious senses in which the Bible uses the term. The word often is employed in the sense of intervention, vindication, albeit it is a vindication which has regard, also, to the divine holiness. For example, in the fifty-fourth Psalm we find the prayer, "Save me, O God; judge me by Thy

strength". The Prophet Jeremiah declares of the coming Redeemer, "He shall judge the cause of the poor and needy". That is, He will deliver them from the oppressor, reversing the false position imposed on them by their cruel persecutors. Matthew, quoting from Isaiah, says, "He shall show judgment to the Gentiles \* \* \* the bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory, and in His name shall the Gentiles trust". What could be more tender? It is like the opening of a dove-cote for the ingathering of heathen souls who are expected to come flying as clouds that they may home themselves in God. After Christ's healing of the man born blind, described in the ninth chapter of John, Christ promulgates His great law of grace in the expression, "For judgment came I into this world"—a new kind of judgment, a judgment according to grace—"that they which see not may see".

*The Moral Acknowledgment in Christ's Work.* But a second thing which needs to be premised, in connection with the law of sacrifice is this: that in the work of Christ, the emphasis properly belongs to the moral acknowledgment therein made, rather than to the mere pain He bore.

In some conceptions of the atonement, supposedly most orthodox, too large an emphasis has been put upon the sufferings of Christ as such; as if the sufferings won the pardon. The old view of a "limited atonement" sprang out of the conviction that in the divine mind there was an exact estimate of the amount of suffering required for the sins of a given number of the race. That which is sometimes called "the commercial view" of the atonement, is objectionable for a similar reason, that a certain amount of pain is conceived as an offset to a definite amount of sin. Thus the atonement would be purely a matter of the exact payment of debt. But this conception would be incongruous with the necessity of any real pardon.

When Jesus was upon earth, while indeed He referred at times to the depth of His sorrow, yet He did not magnify the mere suffering He was called to bear, nor appeal for pity on its account. Even on the way to Calvary, when "there followed Him the great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented Him", He turned unto them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children". Jesus would not have any mere compassion. Some of the mediæval conceptions expressed in portraits of the Christ, representing Him as an object of pity, convey most misleading impressions; they strike one as effeminate, and often as sycophantic. Christ, while the greatest of sufferers, was only incidentally such; up to the last moment of His heart-break, He was ever actuated by the principles of the highest self-respect; and He always conveyed the impression that with perfect self-command He was moving towards the sublimest moral goal. There was something unmistakably deeper to be affected by the cross, than the mere sympathy of mankind. The acknowledgment made in the moral realm, of the righteous and yet gracious relations with which Jesus was dealing, was the central thing. Says Dr. Godet: "When Christ gave out His last submis-



sive cry upon the cross, it was in one conscience alone that this judgment of the world's sin, the echo of that which God pronounces in heaven, took place. But as there is only one rationality in all intelligent minds, so in reality there is only one and the same conscience in all moral beings; and thus it is that the cry which came from that one perfectly normal conscience, is yet to re-echo in all other human consciences". The most valuable thing about the humiliation of Christ, was that He assumed it with unquestioning submission. In the Epistle to the Hebrews it is called "the obedience". This was its terminal point; it was the acknowledged propriety of it all, that so vindicated God.

Christ's offering was thus an answer to something final in God's universe. Dr. P. T. Forsyth, principal of Hackney College, London, who in various recent papers\* has thrown great light upon the atonement, has pointed out that later theological thought, while amply recognizing the principle of sacrifice,—sacrifice as mere altruism,—has done scant justice to the idea of judgment in its far-reaching Biblical sense; a sense which has relation to grace as well as law. This conviction is deeply shared by the writer of this paper.

*Judgment more Final than Sacrifice.* Now, the idea of sacrifice as an end is without warrant either in Scripture or reason. At best it can be only a means; sacrifice is never an end, except to the ascetics. A man has no more right to sacrifice himself in the sense of destroying or injuring himself than he has to commit suicide. Whenever, as in monasticism, or in the rites of self-oblation which characterize Hinduism, or in self-applied legalistic rigors, the pains inflicted are thought to have a value or merit in themselves, they are idolatrous rather than Christian; they are morbid and always end disastrously. Judgment, however, is a proper end in itself; it means the vindication of holiness, of righteousness, even of such righteousness as embraces in it all that we include in the terms love and grace; and beyond such vindication one cannot go; the last standard of appeal has been reached. It was to such a standard that the atonement had reference. At the very basis, therefore, of the law of Christian sacrifice lies this principle of judgment so needing to be restored to the thought of our day. This term "judgment" is only another word for the redeeming realism of God's universe with both a severe and a gracious bearing. When, therefore, we shall shortly say, as we must, that Christ in the work of His cross had a supreme reference to principles of judgment, we shall simply mean that He was doing justice to all the moral and spiritual situation required in His Father's endeavor to save the world. He was dealing with the actual realities in the case—the realities of grace as well as of holiness—such realities as the final judgment will disclose.

*Christ's Death a Judgment-Death.* We are now prepared, I trust, to come to the consideration of Christ's sacrificial-death as a judgment-death in behalf of the world. By the sacrificial-death, we mean something very

\* See Christian World Pulpit, Oct. 1, 1902, and May 20, 1903.

different from the tragedy of the crucifixion.\* The crucifixion was an expression of human sin at its worst, whereas the cross of the atonement was the expression of God at His best. The crucifixion was the most criminal act in the history of man, whereas the atoning act was the sublimest act in the moral history of God; it was the historical expression of that which was voluntary and eternal in God's character, government and practical attitude toward men. This atonement at its base was an invisible thing. It dealt with factors like these: with the divine government, the divine holiness, the divine love; and all these as related to human sin in its inmost essence. In all, then, that Christ was exacting on the divine side, He was in some profound way experiencing not merely mortal death, but that death which is immeasurably deeper, namely, that spiritual death, that separation from God which is the consequence of sin. In this profound sense He "tasted death for every man". He was deserted for the hour, that all who believe in Him may be forever received into fellowship with the divine.

It is well known that William Cowper, the poet, passed much of his life under clouds of melancholia, and that in his death he morbidly felt that he was deserted. On a visit to his grave, Mrs. Browning took up this morbid thought of Cowper's and thus wrote correcting it:—

"Deserted! God could separate from his own essence rather:  
And Adam's sins have swept between the righteous Son and Father;  
Yea, once, Immanuel's orphaned cry His universe hath shaken—  
It went up single, echoless, 'My God, I am forsaken!'

"It went up from the Holy's lips amid His lost creation,  
That, of the lost, no son should use those words of desolation;  
That earth's worst phrensies, marring hope, should mar not hope's fruition,  
And I, on Cowper's grave, should see his rapture in a vision!"

The death of Jesus was intrinsically a judgment-death. Perhaps the term "judgment-death" which we employ, or, to use a broader term, "judgment-infliction" would be better understood in the light of a concrete example. Of course, the judgment-death which Jesus bore was a matter so original and unique that no human illustration of it can be adequate. An illustration, however, may help. An acquaintance of the writer had a noble young son, who, however, on one occasion disobeyed his father and then sought to cover disobedience by falsehood. The father, on ascertaining the facts, summoned his son and asked him what he thought should be done about it. The son replied, "you should whip me". The father assented, and took the boy aside to inflict the chastisement; when, however, the father came to use the whip his great heart broke and, instead of striking the boy, he said, "I cannot think of whipping you; you are a small, delicate boy,

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\* It is indeed true that the New Testament references to the crucifixion seem, at first sight, to place value on the crucifying act. It appears to us, however, that Christ simply adopted that which was intended to be the mark of His shame—His execution upon a cross—as the symbol of His moral enthronement secured through a deeper dying and its consequent resurrection; and thus "by the most exalted irony of history," the New Testament represents Christianity as glorying in the cross: glorying not in what criminal men intended, but in what God purposed and accomplished on the ground of what He Himself had wrought on the divine side of the Calvary enactment.

and I am a large, strong man. I can better bear the whipping than you". So, removing his own coat, the father bade the boy to lay the whip on his own back. The boy struck a blow or two, but becoming overwhelmed with grief ran away to his chamber, where he was shortly found begging the divine forgiveness. It will be readily believed that such a form of correction needed no repetition. Bronson Alcott, the transcendental philosopher, at one time introduced a similar form of discipline in his boys' school in Boston. For certain transgressions, the master, instead of the pupil, was to receive the punishment. The first time it was applied the culprit broke down, and the school broke down. So marked was its influence that it seemed likely to eventuate in an evangelical revival. Both these forms of judgment-infliction referred to, the one in the family and the other in the school, in principle are akin to that which under grace is employed in the divine government, and for moral power the principle is unequalled.

On the basis of the judgment-death, or infliction, which God in Christ endured, human salvation was made possible. By this we mean that in effect certain great judicial results affecting God's government over men—His saving mastery of men—were achieved, results which could have been secured in no other way.

*Four Objective Achievements of the Atonement.* We name four of these results, results which enter into the objective side of the atonement. The first result was the acknowledgment, made in Christ's experience, of the due judgment or condemnation which belongs to the collective evil of the race—that judgment which the sin-principle merited: "Now is the judgment of this world". The second result was the casting out of the self-principle, or the false philosophy which characterizes Satan himself, and on which he also depends for the subversion of God's ideals in human life; the fallacious world-principle of which Satan is the author, by Christ's moral attitude up to the moment he expired, was set at nought, was judged to its potential destruction, as having no rational or moral justification. "The prince of this world hath been judged". "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me". "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out". This meant the ultimate destruction of Satan himself objectively, as well as in us. The power of Christ's cross achieved it. The third result was this: Christ's death was a judgment-death in the sense that it potentially destroyed the nexus whereby sin and spiritual death had been bound together. So now, through what Christ effected on His cross, notwithstanding man's sin, we need not spiritually and eternally die. This, of course, works subjectively in us, but it was first in principle a historical achievement, and so objective also. Christ came "to destroy the works of the devil". Thus redemption is deeper than natural causation. And the fourth result was this: Through this judgment-death on the cross, mankind was bought in as a reversionary treasure, and so became adjudged to Christ forever as His peculiar possession. At all these points the atonement in principle was substitutionary, and so really vicarious: it was more than vicarious; it was vicario-vital, inasmuch as in the atoning work of Christ it is always implied that its



benefits inure to those who are presupposed to become through faith vitally one with Christ.

In all this work of the judgment-death the divine love was peculiarly shown. Divine love in the Scriptures, in fact, "has no meaning apart from the consideration that it took hold of the central situation of man's sin and guilt". Love dealt with these in grace, instead of according to their strict merits. Perhaps we need to pause here, for this needs to be emphasized. Nothing in current thought is so misunderstood as the divine love. Divine love has a peculiarity: it is utterly unlike any other form of love in the world, because it enters into responsibility for human sin and guilt, as the moral situation, as the divine grace and the saving work require. Accordingly, divine love can deal with man in complete holiness, and at the same time safeguard his endless future. So it is that Christ shall "bring forth judgment unto victory", that judgment becomes the foundation of a system of grace. Thus, the salvation of the Gospel is a salvation by judgment rather than from it; nothing can go behind it; it is a basis of adjudication, a method of settlement in grace and righteousness, of all the claims of the holy God upon the fallen sinner.

Through this fourfold achievement, we understand that the judgment enacted by Christ on His cross extended to the deepest realities of the moral universe, in this world and the next. In effect, it anticipated every essential moral issue that can cause dread to the human soul in anticipation of the last day. The penal difficulty with respect to past transgressions has been potentially met. Satan, man's great accuser, his arch enemy, has been potentially destroyed. The death doom entailed by sin has been potentially cancelled. And we all in the intent of God have been adjudged to Christ as His potential possession. We are regarded as Christ's own, ransomed unto Himself, His bride, as dear to Him as the apple of His eye. With such results as these in principle accomplished, and personally appropriated by the vital faith of the believer, all fear of the last day is cast out, so that with confidence we may sing:

" Bold shall I stand in that great day,  
For who aught to my charge shall lay?  
Fully absolved from these I am,  
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame".

That day is to become our coronation day, a day in which Christ Himself has vastly more at stake than have we. Thus in the profoundest sense Christ's judgment-death was an anticipation of all possible expressions of judgment in the future; and it becomes for all men the touchstone of character and destiny.

## II.

*The Secondary Form of the Law of Sacrifice.* We now pass to that secondary form of the law of sacrifice, which springs out of the primary one we have just considered, and is conformable to it; that self-sacrifice in behalf of others which the followers of Christ are to exhibit. As for their Lord, so for them, "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die,

it abideth alone". Not that any portion of the disciples' suffering was needed to complete the atonement. That, as a finished work, stands ever by itself, albeit it has implications which involve the disciple. We are to "fill up on our part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh for His body's sake".

This occasion of the visit of the Greeks, and the utterances it evoked from Christ, is one of three momentous hours in His career, in which He was authenticated by an audible voice spoken by the Father right out of the blue. The first occasion was at the baptism; the second was at the transfiguration; and the third was this occasion when the Greeks came. There is something common to the teaching of each of these outstanding hours; and that common teaching is fundamental. It concerns Christ's coming death and resurrection. These two things are really twin parts of one indivisible fact, the consummated atonement. For in the Scriptures the cross always eventuates in the resurrection, and the resurrection always presupposes the atonement. The resurrection is not conceived as a mere survival of a Jesus who was slain, but rather as the affixing of heaven's seal to the validity and value of the judgment-death endured. It was "not possible that He should be holden of death", because through His supernatural judgment-death, He had destroyed him that had the power of natural death, that is, the devil. At the Jordan, on the mount, and at the coming of the Greeks, Christ was striking the keynote of His complete gospel, namely, this law of sacrifice,—the one only law which the Father emphasized with a voice, nay with a thrice repeated voice, from the eternities;—He could not withhold this emphatic approval when Jesus His Son was accepting His own unique dying and living again as central to all His mission.

At the baptism, the approval concerned Christ's official perfecting as the last Adam; on the mount the voice concerned the message essential to be preached, if demons were to be cast out and mankind transformed into divine Sonship; the message of "His decease", or "exodus"—that triumphant passage of the Red Sea of His judgment-death—"which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem;" while the voice on this third occasion accentuated the only principle on which Christ's successors could gain power for their world-wide task, namely, the principle of sacrificial love. As Christ had gained His authority to redeem through His cross, so the disciple would gain His power to impress the salvation in that cross through a similarly surrendered life, and the spiritual quickening which would follow it. Hence those words in vs. 25 and 26: "He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will the Father honor".

But here again we need to be on our guard in interpreting the law of sacrifice, that we do not fall into ascetic error. As with Christ, the emphasis was primarily upon the acknowledgment made by His conscience rather than the pain He bore, so in the life of the disciple, the acknowledgment of the moral claim in love, whatever its cost to self-gratification, is the main

thing. The moment one imagines, in a line of missionary service, for example, that he is performing some excess of devotion, some work of supererogation, or acquiring merit with God, he is false to Christ's law. The highest form of self-abnegation, even of martyrdom, ever expressed by the most heroic devotee, whether in a Francis of Assisi, or in a Paton of the New Hebrides, is at its best only the manifestation of an elementary relation to Christ. In this realm, heroics are wholly out of the question.

*Why the Necessity of Sacrifice at all.* But some one will ask, where is the moral necessity for this law of sacrifice? This law is really the deepest paradox in Christianity. The necessity for it lies in the fact of sin. Upon the foreseen certainty that sin would come into the world, God saw it could be overcome in no other way than through a great judgment-death on the part of His Son, and through a new habit of life engendered in His people, conformable to that death. If there were no sin, it would be unnecessary in the moral realm for the "grain of wheat to fall into the earth and die". Angels follow no such law; unfallen beings would not need to. But "as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin", so through death, in another form, the havoc sin had wrought was undone, "that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death". Through obedience to this law by the Spirit, the sin-principle, the self-centered principle of being which Satan brought in receives its death blow, and evil is progressively overcome and eliminated in so far as place is given to the working of the higher law of vicarious love.

*Sin, how Expiated?* It is in these deep two-fold senses,—through the work of Christ objectively on the cross, and subjectively in the believer,—that sin is expiated; it is potentially destroyed. The moral difficulty with which God in Christ was dealing in His law of sacrifice, was that of establishing a consistent method of bestowing pardon on the sinner, and at the same time of creating within him a loathing of his sin. Be it observed that this is not expiation in any pagan sense of that term; it should never be confounded with it. It had no reference to God's disposition as if that needed to be placated or appeased; it had reference to the moral necessities of the case. Had there been no proper regard for these, the moral sense of mankind, quite apart from what was demanded by God, could not have been satisfied. To have forgiven sin without such a work as was wrought by Christ upon His cross would have legitimized it. But now, since in connection with this objective achievement of Christ's atonement, a new energy by the Spirit of God also works within the soul, a positive righteousness establishes itself upon the neck of sin and in the end will overcome and destroy it.

Of course the death principle for the believer in this law of sacrifice or expiation above referred to is itself also a deep paradox, because it is a unique form of death, a death which in Christ's case was a judgment-death, but which in the disciple's case is a regenerating death. This issues not in self-destruction but in self-recovery through the spiritual resurrection which accompanies it. Death thus becomes a process not of burial in order to



decay, but of planting in order to harvest. We bury dead refuse; we plant living germs; that which perishes is the mere husk, the outside wrappings; this sets free the springing principle of higher, even divine life. Through the transformation in this law of sacrifice, we realize a productiveness altogether transcending any processes of mere self-preservation. It is at this point that a new spontaneity of righteousness is begotten by the Spirit of God, so that in the loyalty of its Redeemer, the ransomed and renewed soul avows new fealty to God as expressed in the psalm, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God". A dying which thus results is not a waste, but is the highest economic recuperative force in the moral universe. A soul thus recovered, has a safeguard also against a second fall which the first Adam never knew. Moreover, through the operation of this law issues the potency of the new heavens and new earth having for their capital the new Jerusalem.

*Relation of the Atonement to World-Evangelization.* But we cannot leave this law of sacrifice without accentuating its intended application, as Christ Himself did to the matter of world-evangelization. Our Lord having uttered His homily concerning the secondary expression of His principle of sacrifice thus soliloquizes: "Now is My soul troubled and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour?" This would have been the natural thing to ask but for the problem of sin. The sin problem, however, cannot be ignored. Accordingly, Jesus instantly adds, "But for this cause came I unto this hour". This was the distinctive goal for which "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us". Then in a passion of absolute loyalty to the divine purpose, Jesus throws Himself into the prayer, "Father, glorify Thy name". It was at that moment that "there came a voice out of heaven, saying, 'I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again'". This meant not merely that the Father would glorify Himself in the resurrection of Christ to follow, but it implied also, as we think, that in the new epoch of Gentile evangelization into which Christ's successors would be brought, the divine name would be further glorified through them. And as if to put beyond all doubt what was intended by this miraculous utterance, Jesus made the decisive comment, "This voice hath not come for My sake, but for your sakes"; and if for their sakes, the Saviour implied that God the Father was putting upon them the work of continuing Christ's expression of vicarious love for a lost world.

Once then, of the three times in which the audible voice came forth from the Father right out of heaven, it came for the benefit of those who were to build upon the foundation of Christ in the work of evangelizing the nations. Precisely the same emphasis which was afforded to Jesus Himself at the Jordan, and to the gospel message on the transfiguration mount was now given to the principle of their missionary task. This voice was the Father's accent upon that task. Moreover, it was to be conceived by those who apprehend it as perpetually reiterating itself till the end of the dispensation.

*The Father's Accent.* We justly magnify the great commission of the Son, uttered just prior to His ascension. We habitually dwell upon the commission of the Holy Spirit given at Pentecost—upon the import of that

day with the descending breath, the heavenly fire and the supernatural tongues, empowering the church for high execution, and we do well. But there is a commission of the Father—the first person of the Holy Trinity, also—uttered direct from heaven on the significant day we are now contemplating, which comes to us with the emphasis of the first person of the Godhead. This commission was intended, not for Christ, but for the disciples who stood about Him, and for their successors, and for theirs, and for theirs, repeating itself right on through each generation up to our own; and through us to be passed on to all our successors until the work shall be finished and the kingdom shall have fully come. And yet multitudes among us in the modern church seem never to have heard this all-commanding voice at all. Some who heard those august tones said that “it thundered”. Sometimes in the summer time when the conditions have favored, we have been in the midst of an electric storm, the concussions of which became continuous. A peal breaking from one part of the heavens rolled into another arising from a different quarter, and that melted into one immediately above our heads, which again reverberated to all the surrounding points of the compass; this woke yet other sounds, until really for hours there was one long roll like the reveille of the eternities. So it seems to us in the thought of this climacteric teaching of the third day of our Lord’s passion, God would be understood as sounding through the heavens above our heads a long continuous thunder call summoning His followers of all times and places to universal cooperation with His glorified Son in the work of the world’s salvation. That voice has never ceased to sound since our Lord passed it on to His church.

*Bearing of this on Missions.* The work involved in the sublime commission growing out of the law of sacrifice in a few brief sentences is this. To give to the heathen world the benefit of the anticipatory judgment set up in the cross of Christ to prepare them for the final judgment of the last day. It was for this that the great judgment-death on Calvary was enacted and promulgated,—that every last moral issue that can arise in the last assize, might be met and settled in advance. Without the knowledge of that judgment enacted on the cross the heathen are shut up to that poor blurred judgment which exists in their own fallen natural consciences. That indeed God will not despise, “in the day when He shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ”. But this is utterly inadequate; it lacks dynamic. It affords no certainty of salvation to the heathen who universally live under the torture of their guilty and superstitious fears; it has little educative and transforming power. At the best it can only afford a low form of embryonic salvation, infantile in character. It certainly can furnish no such full and glorious salvation as God has prepared for everybody in Christ’s cross. It is the denial of the benefit of this anticipatory judgment in Christ’s cross through long ages to the heathen world that is their spiritual poverty and the church’s crime. Evangelical Christians—a few of them—have entered upon work for the heathen to the degree they have, because to some extent they perceive the force and value of Christ’s judgment-death as related to

human destiny. Like Paul, they know that that death has potentially changed the moral status, the divine possibilities in grace for all mankind. Hence they are zealous to render actual the potential in the real experience of the heathen. It is this that creates the evangelical motive for missions. This it is also which raises the obligation to evangelize the heathen to an entirely distinctive plane. It is the obligation to *give being* to the church among peoples to whom as yet it is impossible.

To us, therefore, who through Christ have received mercy, God looks to extend that mercy to every groping pagan mind. To the degree that we also in the performance of that task die with Him and rise again to newness of life and service on the whole world-wide field, will the church become possessed with power to transform the earth.



## \* THE ATTRACTING POWER OF THE CROSS.

(ST. JOHN 12: 32.)

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We are all familiar with the three possible ways of reading the Bible: to read into it what we wish it to mean, to read out of it what we do not wish it to mean, or to let it say what it evidently does mean. No doubt we have found it much easier to read the Bible in either or both the former ways than in the third. It is especially hard for us to rid our minds of prepossessions in the subject now before us. To the great multitude of devout believers, this chapter is the watershed of John's Gospel, as the thought of the 32nd verse is the watershed of human history. In the minds of many, however, possibly of some here today, an exception will be taken to using the words of the subject assigned to me as an interpretation of the text before us. It will be objected by some that Jesus did not refer to His death at all but to His exaltation, John's interpretation being more or less of an impertinence. Others, while admitting that Jesus here refers to His death, would hold that He in no sense thinks of it as being the power of attraction. His death was a necessary incident to His heavenly exaltation, but it is the exaltation that attracts. So, for the present, let us lay aside the subject as stated, and, so far as possible dispossessing our minds of bias of all kinds except a bias toward the truth, let us try to discover our Lord's meaning in these words: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself". On the face of these words is our Lord's evident desire to draw all men to Himself. This will take place He declares if He "be lifted up from the earth".

John interprets these words as follows: "Now this He said signifying by what manner of death He should die", an interpretation that in many quarters is treated with scant courtesy. It is difficult for the ordinary reader to understand why John may not be as well qualified to interpret the words of Christ correctly as any one in a later age. But without entering into this controversy, let us see if there is any light we may discover for ourselves.

Twice before, as recorded by John, Jesus used this same expression concerning Himself, with the omission in each case of the words "from" or "out of the earth". To Nicodemus (3: 14) He said: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him may have eternal life". In John 8: 28 He said to the unbelieving and hostile Jews: "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am He".

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\* Delivered at the Fifth Conference, held at the Central Baptist Church, February 10, 1904.

The word *hupsōo* is used literally of place and means "to lift up", "to lift up on high", and so comes to mean "to exalt", "to raise to eminence". From the reference in the first quotation to the pole on which the brazen serpent was hung, from the fact that the unbelieving Jews did lift up Jesus upon the Cross, and thus fulfil literally the prophecy of the second reference, and remembering that the literal meaning of the word refers to place, it ought not to be considered a sign of unwarranted bias to accept at its face value John's interpretation of the third use of the expression. That the words "from" or "out of the earth" would totally change the significance of the word, making it refer only to the heavenly exaltation, would seem unwarranted, unless the whole tenor of the passage positively demanded it. That it may give to the passage a double significance so that it includes the death on the Cross and the exaltation to the Father's right hand is quite open to belief.

To understand this verse clearly, however, we must take our stand with Jesus and, if possible, face the situation from His point of view. The great confession had been made; and immediately after this Jesus had told the disciples that He must go up to Jerusalem to suffer many things of the Chief Priests, the Elders and the Scribes, and be put to death, and the third day rise again. Three times over with solemn emphasis is this repeated. When the natural supposition would be that He would stay away from Jerusalem where His claims were derided or ignored and remain in Galilee among friends, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem. At this time there was no hostility that He could not, if He wished, have easily escaped. But He insists that He has a mission to fulfil. He evidently sees in the shame and death the purpose for which He came. He entered Jerusalem by His own deliberate choice in such a manner as to draw the attention of the multitudes to His Messianic claims. He receives with apparent satisfaction the plaudits of the multitudes and the hosannas of the children.

And now some Greeks, evidently proselytes, though of pagan birth, had requested to be introduced to Him. At their request we hear Him say, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified". Frequently during His ministry He had said (or it had been said of Him) "Mine hour is not yet come". Now He sees that hour at hand. It is an hour when He is to be glorified; yet it is an hour so filled with darkness and horror that we hear Him saying, "Now is my soul troubled and what shall I say". "Father save me from this hour". Light is given us here from the parable of the wheat. "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth by itself alone, but if it die, it beareth much fruit". The very reason of the existence of the wheat is that it may die and in dying reproduce itself. Its life is of value only as it dies, and is to be interpreted only through its death. The hour then is the hour of Glory, but of a Glory that is inseparable from shame and death and the horror of great darkness more bitter than death. In the request of the Greeks, He sees the waving grain ripe for the harvest, but He sees that before the

harvest, if He would live and give enduring life to others He must first apply to Himself the law of the wheat and die. His first vision is that of Glory. Then the picture dissolves into a picture of the blackness of death incomparably terrible, and His soul shrinks for a moment, but presently the vision changes to that of a redeemed world, and in the center of it is the Cross reflecting the halo of eternal glory which it creates.

One other point gives further light. If the Cross is to be His triumph, then it must be the final defeat of him, who through it, aimed his last and deadliest blow at the sacred head. "The prince of this world" shall be overcome and cast out from the place of power he has usurped over the lives of men. The blow aimed at the head of the Son of Man will rebound upon his own head to his final and complete undoing. Like the serpent that so firmly fastens its fangs in its victim that it cannot withdraw them till all their venom is exhausted, and its victim is not only too strong to be overcome, but rather crushes the serpent's head; so Satan will exhaust his power to hurt, and, unable to overthrow the Son of Man, will be himself defeated and dethroned. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me". And I, victor just where I will be thought to be vanquished; I lifted up upon the Cross as upon a throne of triumph, will draw all men unto Myself. It is not at all necessary to exclude the Resurrection and Ascension. They are integral parts of the one transaction without which the death would be an ignominious defeat. The essential point here, however, is that Christ speaks of His death not as a painful incident in the course of His high calling, but as the very fulfilling of His mission; not as a shameful trial to be undergone before He can attain His Glory and win men to Himself, but as the means of His glorification, reflecting the Glory it accomplishes, and itself drawing men to Himself.

If now it has become plain that John has interpreted Christ correctly in this verse, we may go on to discover what are the essential elements in this lifting up that constitute it so great a power over men.

Without going at length into the apostolic interpretation of Christ's death, which would be beside our purpose, let us simply note in passing, that in Paul and Peter and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, with such variations as differences in writer and purpose and destination would justify, we have a unanimous interpretation of Christ's death as a vicarious sacrifice, related to God's love, but also made necessary on account of sin and itself the condition of man's forgiveness. They declare that Christ deliberately laid down His life. That this course was necessary. That its need lay in man's sin. Paul differs from the others in carrying the question one step further back in its logical course and relating it to God's righteousness, which is that attribute in God which takes cognizance of sin. "That He might be just and the justifier".

It has been claimed that in John there is an entirely different conception. That here we have Redemption through Revelation, not Revelation through Redemption. It is true, as Dr. Geo. B. Stevens expresses it, "That John dwells less than most of the New Testament writers upon the legal



aspects of the divine nature, but there are not wanting evidences that the conception of the divine love which underlies all his religious ideas includes the idea of righteousness, that self-respecting attribute of God which occasions His holy displeasure at sin, and requires it to be expressed and vindicated while sin is forgiven". When John speaks of the Lamb of God, he is speaking of a sacrificial lamb. He speaks of Christ as the "propitiation for our sins". True, he does not enter into controversy over this point. He speaks as though this were commonly understood and accepted as fundamental. In the Gospel he is less concerned with the method by which salvation comes than by its actual realization. But we are assured that this apostolic interpretation was largely dogmatic, reflecting the mental characteristics and training of the Apostles and the exigencies of the times. It was, we are told, an apologetic designed to meet the reproach of the Jew, to whom the Cross was a stumbling block, and of the Greek, to whom it was foolishness, rather than a fair interpretation of the teaching of their Lord.

The question resolves itself into this: Did Paul entirely misunderstand, and so misrepresent, the meaning of the death of Jesus, and did the other Apostles "paulinize", or have they all alike sat at the feet of Jesus? We know what they said, "That which we have seen and heard and our hands have handled declare we unto you". "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received". "And we are witnesses of these things". It seems to the plain man quite impossible to walk with Jesus as His steps are traced by the Synoptists, from His baptism where He accepts His mission, into the wilderness where He is tempted to exchange it for an easier and less worthy one, or at least to use unspiritual means to fulfil it; to hear His prophecy of the bridegroom being suddenly snatched away in the midst of the festivities (Mt. 9: 14) to catch His hint in reference to Jonah; and then to follow Him, as we have already done, from Cæsarea Philippi to Jerusalem to hear Him say that He gave His life a ransom for many; to go with Him to the upper room, where in memorable words He relates His death to the founding of the new covenant sealed by His sacrificial blood; to watch with Him in Gethsemane and to stand beneath His Cross until we hear Him cry, "It is finished",—I say it is quite impossible for the plain man thus to follow Him through His life and be content with any interpretation of that death short of the Apostolic.

In John's Gospel we find Christ represented, as in the synoptics, as early in His ministry revealing His consciousness that His mission on earth was to die for men. To the Jews in the temple He said (2: 19): "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it again". And I have no disposition to sneer at John when he interprets these words as referring to Christ's death. To Nicodemus He said (3: 14): "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up". After the feeding of the five thousand, we have in chapter 6 His long discussion concerning His flesh and blood, where His sacrificial death is the very heart of the passage. In 8: 28 we read: "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then ye shall know that I am He". In 10: 11, 17, 18, He is "the good

shepherd who giveth his life for the sheep". John strongly emphasizes the malignity of the Jews which caused Christ's death.\* Yet at the same time he records Christ's repeated words: "No man taketh it from Me; I lay it down of Myself; I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again".

A common method of discrediting the strength of Jesus' testimony to Himself is to take each separate passage often apart from its connection, and reducing it to its smallest conceivable meaning, to declare "This is all that Jesus meant". "But," as Stalker puts it, "it is not often the natural meaning, and one gets tired of this perpetual shallowing of everything Jesus said".† What reason is there for thinking that the most superficial sense of profound words is most nearly true? Why should we assign to the words only that possible meaning that divests them of all their original associations? There may be single passages where the meaning is so nicely balanced, that a slight bias of mind will turn the scales. But when we see the scales tipped in a single direction in every case, however weighty the words may be on the other side, and this always in the direction of divesting those words of all their deepest meaning, we may be pardoned for a suspicion that the scales are loaded.

But now leaving the general significance of our Lord's death, let us ask what it is in particular that constitutes the Cross of Christ so mighty a power over men? In the first place I would say, the Cross is the supreme revelation of God's love to men. "God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son" is our Lord's explanation of the motive prompting the sacrifice. Men spare those they love; they seek to shield them from harm. Fathers and mothers seek to shield their children from the chilly winds and biting frosts of life. God "spared not" His Son, but freely gave Him, because He loved the world. It is an exhibition of Christ's love. Voluntarily and gladly He laid down His life for the sheep. Because He had a mind of love toward men, "He did not insist on retaining His equality with God", but freely humbled Himself even to the death of the Cross. Though He was rich, yet for the sake of men whom He loved better than His riches, He beggared Himself, pouring out His soul unto death. Here in the Cross we see the aching heart of God laid bare. Here we see the very throbbing of His love.

The parable of the Prodigal Son is a graphic and beautiful picture of God's love painted in colors drawn from human life. The Cross is the final proof of God's love set forth in overwhelming reality. No mere picture of love, even when painted by the Master Artist Himself can ever satisfy the heart of man. But for the man who has the love proven to him by the Cross, the picture is of inestimable value "Lest we forget". We do not know love in its length and breadth and height and depth until we see it making cost to itself. For this reason the parable of the Prodigal cannot be taken as an epitome of the Gospel, for although it beautifully portrays the

\* (5: 18; 7: 19-30; 8: 37-40; 10: 31, 32; 11: 50.)

† *The Christology of Jesus*, p. 121.

freeness and fulness of God's love, it is absolutely silent as to its depth and cost. No words however fair and strong could ever tell the cost to God of expressing His redeeming love. And let us remember that as Dr. Denny has so well said: "If there is no atonement in it, neither is there any Christ in it". If that parable is an epitome of the Gospel, then as Harnack has affirmed, "Christ has no place in the Gospel He proclaims". But we know that this parable is a beautiful picture whose interpretation is the Cross. The only light in which it can be properly seen is the light that radiates from the Cross. The Cross alone gives it proper perspective.

It was this amazing love that mastered the apostles and inspired them. They never felt that they could take salvation for granted. To them salvation was a miracle of miracles, the wonder of which never ceased. A gospel which could be taken for granted would be for them no gospel. But here was the infinite and holy God sending His only-begotten Son into the world to save them. Here was their loved Master, Whom now they see to have been from eternity, the Creator of all things, sharing their earthly lot, and freely laying down His life for them. This amazing love of their living Lord they cannot ever hope fully to comprehend. It overpowers them and binds them to Him by ties stronger than death.

Perhaps some of you will remember the story of the two street arabs, Rag and Dan, whom Mrs. Mason received into her class in the Mission Sunday school. They were well versed in the life and language of the slums, but knew as little as a Hottentot about the Bible and the love of God. One Sunday afternoon the lesson was on the sufferings of Jesus for the sins of men. Very tenderly Mrs. Mason told them of His patience under persecution, and His quiet yielding of Himself to the power of His enemies, who were plotting to kill Him. "Don't believe it," came suddenly from Rag. A painful and yet delicious thrill shot through the class. But the teacher went over the story again, patiently and tenderly, only to meet another even more uncompromising denial. "Now look-a-here! Me 'n' Dan don't believe no such thing as that. It's a fake, that's wot it is. 'Tain't accordin' to reason for anybody to act that way. You go down on Fourth street, and you hit a feller over the head, and he'll give you one back, he will for sure, if he's big enough. But you say this Man you're talkin' about could do anything He wanted to; and yet He let them galoots around Him get Him into a corner, and do Him up! Well, I guess not!" and the worldly wise young cynic smiled a knowing smile—the smile of one who isn't taken in by children's stories; while his pal nodded his head in acquiescence, and echoed, "Not much!"

Mrs. Mason was driven back as never before to the foundations of her faith; and for the next few months her heart went into her work and out to her boys, her two pagans especially, as never before, until one blessed day, as the story goes, Rag said, looking her steadily in the eye:

"Is this all straight, teacher? Are you sure that you ain't givin' us no bluff?"

And looking him as steadily in the face she answered, in his own dialect:



"Yes, Rag, I'm sure. It's no bluff, it's straight".

For a moment the boy sat in thoughtful silence. Then he said:

"Wot d'you think of it, Dan?"

And for once little Dan spoke out for himself, without waiting for his cue from his leader:

"I tell you, Rag, it's straight goods, just as she says. She's never went back on us yet, an' you bet she ain't going back on us now. I believe it".

And Rag said slowly, with the look of one who sees the dawning of light:

"Yes, I guess it must be straight. But, say, if He done all that for a fellow, how a fellow ought to love Him!"

And the woman who had helped him, and whom he had no less helped, placed her hand on his, and said through her falling tears:

"Yes, Rag; and O, I do so want you to love Him!"

And, still thoughtfully, the lad replied:

"I don't see how I'm goin' to help it".

The loyal Dan echoed, "Neither do I".

For many, this may be all that is needed in explanation of the Cross to constitute it the mighty attracting and regulating power in their lives. For most people, however, there must be further explanation.

Love, to be convincing and commanding, must be no mere display irrelevant to our need; it must relate itself to our peculiar circumstances. If I am standing by the rapids of Niagara, above the falls, and my friend stands by me protesting his love, and to prove it plunges into the rapids and is swept over the falls to his death, I am impressed only with the pity and the folly of it. But, if I am in the rapids struggling for my life, my strength almost gone, and just at the awful brink, and my friend plunges in, and, at the cost of his own life, rescues me from death, then I know the meaning and reality of his love. It was a love that proved itself by meeting my need, by taking my place at the utmost cost to itself.

The very essence of the attracting power of Christ's Cross is that it meets my deepest need. By it He takes my place. "I am the good shepherd", He said; "The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep", and the plain man reading that, has seen it to mean that the shepherd dies to save the sheep from dying. And applying it to Christ has seen that He took the sinner's place and rescued Him from eternal death. The sinner was not only under the power and the stain of sin, but under its penalty and doom. Christ, though without the stain of sin, yielded Himself to its power and bore its doom, that the sinner might escape. "He died for me" was Paul's constant wonder and joy. "The love of Christ constraineth me, because we thus judge that one died for all". This reveals the inspiration of His life of marvelous devotion and sacrifice.

You recall Bunyon's pilgrim as he climbed the hill bounded on either side by the walls of salvation, weighed down with the heavy burden on his back. "Upon that place stood a Cross, and a little below in a hollow a sepulchre. So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up with the

Cross his burden loosed from off his shoulders and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in and I saw it no more. Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said with a merry heart, '*He hath given me rest by His sorrows, and life by His death!*'"

The reason why this exhibition of God's love, God taking upon Himself our ill desert, and at infinite cost to Himself making it possible to forgive us freely, is so marvelous an attracting power is that it starts at the right place by begetting repentance in the human heart. When we are brought to see, in the crucifixion of the Holy One, what awful work sin can do, that He died not for His sin but for ours; if that does not break the heart and stir the conscience to commanding action and bring the will into subjection, nothing can. This moral revolution there must be in order to make the attraction permanent. It is not enough that the prince of this world be formally judged and cast out. Not enough that his reign over the hearts of men should be externally and artificially broken. There must be generated in the hearts of those who rendered him allegiance a deep-seated hatred of his reign, and a bitter repentance for allowing him any place in the heart, then there can be attraction and allegiance to the new Saviour King.

"He hangs a dead corpse on the tree,  
Who made the whole world's life to spring:  
And, as some outcast, shameful thing  
The Lord of all we see.

"Darkness falls thick to shroud the time:  
Nature herself breaks up, and cries:  
Even from the grave shocked ghosts arise,  
At this tremendous crime.

"Speak not: no human voice may tell  
The secrets which these hours enfold:  
By treacherous hands to traitors sold,  
God yields Himself to Hell.

"Speak not, draw close: through stricken heart  
Drink in the sense of all that's here:  
The shame, the cross, the nails, the spear,  
Rending His soul apart.

"Ah! and far crueller, far, than they,  
(Tools and mere symbols these) our sin!  
Breathe to thyself, soul, deep within  
'Twas I that caused this day'.

"Speak not: He speaks not: no reproach  
Falls from those dying lips on thee:  
No vengeance, muttering ills to be,  
Bars thy devout approach.

"Stricken, unmurmuring, dead, divine,  
This day He hangs, as He hung of old;  
Only the drear'sight cries 'Behold!  
Was ever love like mine?'"

And this is the interpretation the history of Christian experience puts upon the Cross.

"Is He a Redeemer or a mere dreamer, preaching a kingdom that cannot come?" Ask history. It is not as a hero that the world has thought of Christ. On a little hill outside a city wall, between two other crosses, a young man hung upon a Cross, all three dying a shameful death. A few weeping friends were gathered about the Cross of the young man. A little later they bear the body away and put it in the tomb, and the stone is rolled against the door, and life and hope and joy are shut in, and darkness and despair reign without. It is a mournful dirge we hear rising from the broken hearts of the few friends and followers. But listen! Presently you catch another note. The same voices, still few in number, but how different the song! You hear it spreading like a grand hymn in a mighty outdoor congregation. In Samaria and in Galilee the strain is taken up. It spreads to Antioch, to Asia Minor. It leaps the Hellespont. It is taken up in Macedonia, in Greece, in Rome. It becomes the national anthem of the Roman Empire, its echoes reverberating around the Mediterranean. But such narrow limits cannot confine this song. It is borne on the wings of the wind across the channel, across the Atlantic, until America takes up the strain. Back it floats to Africa, to India, to China, to the uttermost parts of the earth, until today a mighty chorus from every tribe and tongue joins in the one harmonious song of triumph. And what is this marvellous song? None other than that which John heard on Patmos when he had a vision of a redeemed world joining with the heavenly hosts. "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing".

As nothing else in the world's history has done it, the Cross has dominated the minds of men of all nationalities, of all classes and conditions, by drawing them into the fellowship of Jesus Christ. It has transformed religion from that dead and barren thing it was into the living and fruitful thing we see it today. It has transformed society. It has produced civilization. It has inspired literature and art to their highest uses. Never are men so nearly at their best in any of the works or walks of life as when the Cross is their theme and inspiration. We must not ask those who have looked upon the Cross only from without, as one might look from without on the storied windows of a cathedral, and complain at the dulness and flatness of the picture because he had not seen them glorified by the light of heaven streaming through them; but let us ask those who have been redeemed, from whose minds the image of the Redeemer departed not, who are sharers in His joys and in His sufferings; ask these, and their verdict will be that He was no dreamer, preaching a kingdom that could not come. He is the world's Redeemer, and because He is its Redeemer, He is building up a kingdom that shall have no end.

But this attracting power is purely moral and therefore is not irresistible. "I will draw all men unto Myself", Christ said, using a word that speaks of inner constraint, not of outward compulsion. An Alexander, a



Cæsar, a Napoleon, or a Nicholas may dream of a world-empire, but the mailed fist is their highest conception of the unifying principal of their kingdom. But into the Kingdom of Heaven men are to be drawn by sweet persuasion, not "dragged in" against their wills. No outward constraint could be effective. That the attracting power of the Cross is not irresistible was never more manifest than today. The quite common view that the theories of the apostles concerning Christ's death were simply their adroit efforts to get over the difficulty of Christ's death as a stumbling block proves one thing at least, that the Cross is a stumbling block today, and any expedient that will explain it away will be gladly hailed.

The strongest magnet cannot exert its attractive power through perfect insulation. And no one who attempts to preach the Gospel of the Cross in these days as Christ and His apostles taught it can fail to see that there is much that insulates the minds and hearts of men against it. Are we to give up the preaching of the Cross and seek some magic solvent to apply to men that once more they may become susceptible to its power? By no means. We must continue to preach it, but we should seek such a method of preaching it that it will act as its own solvent and find its way to the hearts of men. It is of no use for us to say "we must preach the old Gospel", and thus excuse ourselves for our failure to meet the problems of our own day. We must preach the old Gospel in the language of our times so as to meet the problems of our times. In order to that we must understand what these things are which especially alienate men from the Gospel of the Cross.

The old problem of man's pride, his unwillingness to humble himself in the dust, acknowledge his helplessness and put himself under so great obligation to Christ is intensified in our day by the deification of humanity. The Incarnation, we are told, is no new thing, but simply the historic expression of the eternal humanity of God. This is no doubt a theory very attractive to the pride of man and one that leaves no room for an atonement. It is a theory that is immensely popular in these days when an attractive theory is preferable to stubborn facts.

Again, many men of our time are enamored of a method of historical research which finds in the patent circumstances of an event its full explanation and forbids applying to the event universal significance. If Jesus of Nazareth aroused the antagonism of Jewish authorities so that they sought and compassed His death, that is enough to explain the fact and we must not seek ulterior causes. Nor must we translate that event, so easily accounted for, into an event of universal significance. This is like asserting that we understand all about the life and growth of a tree because we can explain the constituent elements of the soil in which it grows. A historical method that fails to account for all the facts is unhistorical and unscientific. The true historical method must take account of the facts of sin and redemption and the triumphs of the Cross in the last 1900 years. It must account for the Christianity of today. Its foundation can be neither the fog of mythicizing tendencies in the early church, nor the rottenness of con-

scious deception on the part of the apostles. No building of such magnitude could stand on so slender a foundation. It is far more reasonable to recognize all the facts in the case and seek to conform our historical theories to the facts, than to eliminate the facts in the interest of any theory whatsoever.

Then, there are popular theories of human life which make man so absolutely a part of the "Cosmic Process" as to lead to a denial of the reality of sin, as that word is understood in the New Testament. It makes the atonement appear, as Dr. Denny puts it, "like a rock in the sky". To a far greater degree than we are apt to suppose, the Rubáiyát is revered above the Bible; and even among many who have never heard of Omar Khayyám and who profess to know the Bible, the Rubáiyát expresses their belief concerning sin.

"Oh Thou Who didst with pitfall and with gin  
Beset the Road I was to wander in,  
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round  
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

"Oh Thou, Who Man of baser Earth didst make,  
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:  
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man  
Is blackened—Man's forgiveness—give—and take!"

But more than by anything else perhaps, men are insulated against the preaching of the "True Cross" by what might be called "an irreligious solicitude for God". God is revealed by Jesus as the loving Father. Why cannot He forgive as the earthly father does? What justice can there be in His asking an innocent being to suffer in our stead? "An innocent one cannot take the place of the sinful one anyway" we hear. As a matter of fact, however, the innocent do in human life suffer for the guilty, and often much more than the guilty. Illustrations are before our eyes daily of such suffering of the innocent not only with but in the place of the guilty. The father shields the guilty son and suffers in his stead. He rejoices to do it. Taking the great problem by this small end we may work our way back through the human approach to a partial comprehension of it, though its majesty and mystery are unsearchable.

And God does not take an unwilling victim unrelated to Himself and force him to take the sinners' place. It is God Who is in Christ, at infinite cost, reconciling the world unto Himself. And why can He not forgive without this cost as the earthly father does? We need to remember that however freely the earthly father forgives the wrong against himself, he cannot forgive the sin, for the act was not only a wrong to the father but a sin against God, and only One can forgive sin. God cannot forgive without this atonement, just because the word Father as we commonly use it does not fully represent God to men. For the sweet and beautiful teaching of our Lord concerning the Fatherhood of God, men have in these days substituted a doctrine that some one has irreverently called "the Papahood of God". Let us quote here from Denny, words that this generation sadly need

to hear. "The relations of father and child are undoubtedly more adequate to the truth than those of judge and criminal. They are more adequate, but so far as our experience of them goes, they are not equal to it. If the sinner is not a criminal before his judge, neither is he a naughty child before a parent whose own weakness or affinity to evil introduces an incalculable element into his dealings with his child's fault. \* \* \* It ought to be apparent to every one that even the relation of parent and child if it is to be a moral relation, must be determined in a way which has universal and final validity. It must be a relation in which ethically speaking, some things are forever obligatory and some things forever impossible; in other words it must be a relation determined by law, and law which cannot deny itself. But law in this sense is not legal; it is not 'judicial' or 'statutory' or 'forensic'; none the less it is real and vital and the whole moral value of the relation depends upon it. What would be the value of a forgiveness which did not recognize in its eternal truth and worth that universal law in which the relations of God and man are constituted? Without the recognition of that law—that moral order or constitution in which we have our life in relation to God and each other—righteousness and sin and atonement and forgiveness would all alike be words without meaning".\*

These things enable us to see how grave a problem we have to meet. It is not preaching a glad message to men who have never heard it, and who are stretching out eager hands to receive the blessing. We preach and see little if any response. It is as the poet expresses it:

"As if a well that lay  
Unvisited, till water-weeds had grown  
Up from the depths, and woven a thick mass  
Over its surface, could give back the sun!  
Or, dug from ancient battle plain, a shield  
Could be a mirror to the stars of heaven!"

If we are to meet these conditions and overcome them; if our preaching and teaching are to form any part of those moral agencies which will result in drawing all men to Christ, we must at the outset avoid such presentation as will needlessly add to the thickness of the weeds or rust upon the minds of men that prevent their response to the appeal of the Cross. In our use of terms we must discriminate between their Biblical use and other uses that may be very different. For instance, to use a single illustration, the idea of propitiation often needlessly alienates men from the Cross because they do not understand what the Bible means by the word. "In the heathen view, expiation renders the gods willing to forgive". By sacrifice the personal anger of the god is appeased and his favor bought. Nowhere in Old or New Testament however is there any hint that God has any feeling or disposition averse to forgiveness. "He does not have to be made willing by expiation to forgive sins. He is and always has been willing". "In the Biblical view, expiation enables God consistently with His holiness to do what He was never unwilling to do".† The problem is simply this. How can the Holy

\* *The Atonement and the Modern Mind*, p. 71.

† *Stevens' Johannine Theology*, p. 183.



One take the impure one to His arms and yet remain the Holy One? That problem has been solved. The Holy meets the unholy over the Blood of the Atonement. There is death for evil doing. The evil desert of sin is recognized, yet there is mercy for the repentant. Sin is not encouraged, innocence is not confounded with guilt, and yet the fallen are lifted up.

It is interesting and to many cheering, to notice that in England where we are led in theological thought by fifteen or twenty years, the evangelicals are preaching the atonement in its fullest saving sense. The English delegates to the Congregational Council held in Boston a few years ago almost without exception emphasized and re-emphasized the full atoning significance of Christ's death. As they declared, they have had their Bushnellianism, and safely passed through it twenty years ago. A writer in the Independent at that time said that he asked one and another of the visiting delegates: "Do these men represent the dominant thought of your pulpit?", and the answer was an emphatic affirmative: "That is what our young men are preaching" said Dr. John Brown of Bedford. "We hold to Christ's Redemptive significance. We have now a firmer grasp on the supernatural. We have passed through the stage which laid weight on the moral view. It is something deeper than that. The foundation rests here. 'He was made sin for us Who knew no sin'. Compared with this the mere ethical conception is secondary. As MacLaren said: 'Christianity without a Christ is a dying Christianity'".

To have moving and persuasive preaching we must have a moving and persuasive Gospel. Let us take heart, and hope that our period of sentimental inefficiency may soon be superseded by a time of great power and refreshing from the Lord, growing out of a re-habilitation of the old yet ever new Gospel of the Cross.

But before all and through all, if we would effectively preach and teach the Gospel, we must ourselves be living examples of what the attracting power of the Cross can do. We must be manifestly under the sweet constraint of His love Who died for us. We must apply the law of the wheat to ourselves as fully as He applied it to Himself before we can expect our message to bear fruit in the lives of others. We must not only be willing to cast our lives into the earth of human need, but we must do it. But when we do show our understanding of Christ's love and sacrifice by ourselves entering into the living sacrifice of His service, holding not our lives dear unto ourselves, that we may fulfil our ministry, then we will have the joy unspeakable of having so commended Christ and His cross to men that the winsomeness of His love seen through His Cross will master their hearts and wills, and will bind them to Him by invisible and unbreakable bonds, and we will have hastened the day when by the Attracting Power of the Cross He shall have drawn all men unto Himself.

## \* THE COMMANDMENT OF GOD AND LIFE EVERLASTING.

BY REV. STEWART MEANS, D. D.,

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ST. JOHN 12:49, 50.

For I have not spoken of Myself: but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

And now I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak.

### REVISED VERSION.

For I spake not from Myself: but the Father which sent Me, He hath given Me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life eternal: the things therefore, which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto Me, so I speak.

One of the most striking things to the thoughtful student of human speech is the constant growth and expansion of any language which is the possession of a vigorous and progressive people. The wide range and extension of its thought is met, in most cases at least, by an increase in the terms of its expression. The creative intelligence gets for itself new words to set forth the new ideas. Yet the continuity of the language is preserved by giving to the old forms a new meaning or if not a new, at least a larger and in many respects a different meaning. The obsolete significance of words is one of the characteristics of every old literature. When we enter upon the circle of ideas and the field of the new Christian consciousness, we find here all the characteristic features that are manifest in all literary expression. Old words are loaded down with new meaning and it is often more necessary to understand the mind of the writer than it is to get a definition of his words or phrases. This passage in the Gospel of St. John is a striking illustration of this fact. The first word which meets us as significant is "entola", "commandment". It is not a new but an old word and the common association is also very old. In its religious significance it is notably characteristic. All religions without exception, with which the world was then familiar, were at bottom legal in their idea. No man had any other conception of religion, and in Judaism it was stamped upon every phase of the religious life. It might be said to be one of the fundamental elements of human consciousness everywhere. It was the presence of this preconception, along with many other inherited mental and spiritual attitudes, that quickly made itself an influence in determining how Christianity

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would be understood by the mass of men. For men do not and cannot divest themselves of all which they have inherited in the way of thought and feeling, of temper and atmosphere of soul. Knowing therefore the accustomed associations of the word "commandment", the attentive reader is met with the thought, immediately upon his reading this passage, that St. John is introducing a conception which he had inherited as a Jew and which was native to his mind and thought before he had ever heard of the Gospel or known his Lord. But while there are no philological or grammatical reasons for rejecting this interpretation, there are the strongest indications present through an analysis of his thought which render such a meaning utterly improbable.

In the first place, he is giving the words of Christ. Knowing the attitude of Christ on this way of interpreting religion we know that such a conception could not be His and there is no reason for thinking that St. John has given any turn to this thought in order to establish a view of his own. Christ presents Himself to His disciples as a Son who has a commission from His Father and this commission includes not only what He should say but also how He should say it. Here is where our words begin to cumber the thought and make it hard to penetrate with speech into the real meaning which He was endeavoring to make clear to them. We have the hard objective way of looking at His life and give the common turn of meaning to His words. He does not think of Himself as a messenger sent out alone to deliver the law of the Judge and Ruler of all the earth. He is preeminently and fundamentally a Son. The commandment of God is not an external law under which He is forced to act, but the power of it and the imperative character which belongs to it come from His own inward sympathy and harmony with God's will. It constrains Him not as an alien force but by the very roots which it has in His own will and nature. It is a law to Him because it is also the very principle of His own life. He manifests and obeys the commandment or the will not because He is compelled to, but because it is of the very essence of His own inner nature. It is the absolute impossibility of wishing or doing otherwise that makes in the forms of human speech a commandment, but it is lifted by the very nature of Jesus into the transcendental atmosphere of filial relations. And so it is likewise with the setting forth of this commandment or the obedience to it. However much emphasis we may lay upon the articulate and verbal expression of this commandment, we know that the words fall back for their meaning and power upon the life which they express and out of which they issue. The teaching of Jesus has its chief if not only value in its relation to His character and consciousness. His nature is the perfectly revealed will of God. *He* is the commandment of God. The contents of His very words are Himself. If we use the word commandment here in anything like the way He wishes us to understand it, doubtless it means that it was a commandment to Him not to speak what He spoke only, but to be what He was. Now speech may be but the executive presentation of a foreign will, but "*to be*" means the inward and joyful assent of the nature and the consent



of the entire will to the life that wishes itself to be expressed. The mandatory character of this will lies in its perfection and its inward command over the sources and energies of the soul's noblest thought. It is not easy to measure the words of Christ, and when we pass beyond the speech into the consciousness out of which it issued and try to analyze the interior volitions and spiritual affinities and affections, we are oppressed with our own ignorance and dulness of vision. Yet out of our own Christian experience come some gleams of light which help confirm us in the conviction that His own life and His own words have roused within us. We can and do say that Christ commands us to be pure and gentle and loving. Any noble soul could do this. All great souls have been one in this high demand. Yet what makes His command not a command *for* us, but a command *to* us? Here is where we pass into the region of what is real and vital. It is the irresistible pressure of His perfection, the revelation of the supreme beauty of that which He commands, that wrings from the soul in its first reluctance a deep consent. Not to *be* at once perhaps, but to wish to be. We do not discuss or dispute His right. The beauty of goodness is imperative to the soul and its right is acknowledged instantly by the recognition which the soul confesses of its power and glory. There is no commandment like this that the soul has ever known. Christ presents Himself to us and we cannot help it. He is completely and perfectly all that we feel is noblest and most holy, and the soul instinctively rushes out to consent to His appeal. For appeal is the one word we use here to describe the tenderness and gentleness with which He gains us, but at bottom this appeal has a moral and spiritual imperativeness transcending Kant's "Categorical Imperative".

That is the testimony of the soul's submission to the high moralities of life. This is the passionate assertion of the spirit of man to the lofty sanctities of the character of Jesus Christ. God simply *is* in His love for men what He is, and Christ feels His being as a command to express the same character. Jesus simply *is* to us what He is, and we feel His being as a command. A command not because it is a legal requirement, but because we feel its insistence exerted immediately over the will and spring of all our finest desires. It is here in this spiritual and psychological form, and not in its legal and objective character, that we are to understand and interpret this use of the word "commandment" by Jesus. For we know that the supreme object of His life was to renew the filial mind in men and to re-establish the filial relation as a conscious element of the soul's life.

Now a spiritual relation cannot be enforced by an outward requirement or a legal statute, and even the common moralities of life rest upon the inward capacity of men to feel their beauty and echo their assertion of the moral law. The utter sterility and emptiness of all legal conceptions with reference to the production of spiritual life are made manifest the moment we attempt to go to the roots of character or the springs of action. It is inspiration that counts here and not the barriers of the law. It is the opening of new fountains in the soul, and not the flat dictation of supreme power.

Nothing is more characteristic in the life of Christ than the inwardness of His real life. "I have meat to eat, that ye know not of", He says, and we feel the presence there in the secret of His will of the divine love lifting it and feeding it with the energy of the infinite goodness. The mystery of the Gospel is the mystery of the mind of Christ becoming interior to the mind of man and forming a new consciousness which has as its foundation and fullest expression the realization of the sonship of man to God. This new relation and this new consciousness determine the life and character with an accuracy which no external dictation could enforce. It is the spiritual energy within the life which is more potent than any thunders from Sinai. It is when this word "entola" or "commandment" is used by Christ as issuing from a relation and an outflow of spiritual activities that it has this interior meaning and this spiritual basis. In the Gospel of St. John it is used several times. May I ask you to spend a few moments examining these passages? In John 10:18 occurs that remarkable passage which lifts us into the very face of the spiritual strength of Christ. Beginning with v. 17, He says: "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I may take it again. No one taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power (or right) to lay it down and I have power (or right) to take it again. This commandment received I of My Father". It was the love of the Father, the will of salvation which were imperative for Him. Love always commands us with its own power which is of perfect appropriation. It re-creates our will and the new will becomes the law of our being. No other meaning is possible for this passage. On the other hand in John 11:57 we meet with the common use of the word: "Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given commandment, that if any man knew where He was, he should shew it, that they might take Him". This is external in all its aspects. It is social or statutory authority laying its demands without the least reference to character or the interior disposition; it is the legal demand which asks only for an automatic response. In John 13:34 we are swept back again into the stream and sphere of spiritual relations and activities. "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another". No one can possibly understand the word commandment here as equivalent in quality or range, corresponding in meaning or character with the legal authority of the Pharisees. Its meaning and efficacy lay in the inward persuasion which the perfection of His love exerted upon their dispositions, and the creative energy of His affection. It is not an injunction, but a new spirit, the spirit of His love, filling them too with a similar love. Even the most rigid and narrow legalist among His hearers could not but feel that the word commandment had a new meaning and a loftier and more awful authority than even the law of Moses. For the spirit of God was testifying to the spirit of man and the heart of man felt the new life urging its own necessities. In the 14th chapter we have three passages in which this phrase is used: "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments". "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and

he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him". "But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do". In all these passages there lies back behind the sense of command the authority which creates it. This authority is not external to the man or to the Son Himself. It is love that in its re-enforcement of the spiritual energies proves its own authority. For the highest feelings are a law to the soul which no ordinance of man or tradition can coerce or destroy. The floods are risen up and sweep the soul on into new channels. It is not authority based upon outward claims, but the principle of the real life of man responding to the presence of the divine life that floods it with its regenerating power. It is the determining power of a new love, the passion of a new affection. Loyalty to duty carries men to death, but the Son of God goes to the cross with a joy no man can measure, in obedience to the very law of His being, and reveals the strength of the inward demand which is the ultimate fact in man's true relation to God.

In the 15th chapter the same phrase occurs three times again. "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love". "This is My commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you". The secret of His love is the foundation of their new lives. It is a secret because it is that which is felt and in the inward stores of the soul's affections makes its claims. This is its only and supreme authority. No man can prove the necessity of obedience to Christ, for it rests upon no outward claims. This obedience which ranges free above all the prescriptions of man and all the ordinances of religion is the fountain of all pieties of life and heroisms of character. It is always aspiring to new elevations and reaches forward to larger and nobler living. Its aim is the full realization of its filial relation, and it drives the soul with the pressure of an ever expanding affection. It is the most baffling and puzzling thing in the history of the human soul and is the despair of the world, for it stands upon nothing but its inward experience and deep conviction which can never be set forth in decrees or laws. The more the soul feels the love of God, the more the spirit of the Son grows into fulness and power, the more imperative and complete becomes the insistence with which the spirit plunges on into the fullest possession and expression of its filial character. This is the unique and mysterious fact of the new Christian personality. In the immediate contact of God with the human soul conscious of its sonship, there is an enormous expansion of vision and power. The spiritual capacities are vitalized by the energy of the divine life and each life unfolds itself under the creative force of the divine love and gives full and joyful obedience to the inward pressure of the new life that is seeking realization and expression. This interpretation of the commandment will be confirmed if we regard the obedience not from the point of view of the external act, but of the inward disposition and assent. The human will in relation to a legal demand stands clearly discriminated and separate from that requirement. There is a certain mechan-



ical adjustment on the part of the individual, and his personality is by no means merged in the law. In the case of the obedience of Christ there is the steady and easy flow of the nature forward along the divine will, with the purpose of God working dynamically as an interior energy and not a mechanical or even a moral compulsion. The Divine will is His will, and the manifestation of His nature is the revelation of the nature of God. They are not two separate things, two factors combined in a given result, but the organic unity in which it cannot be said that the elements can be separated and distinguished as the particular contributions of two distinct personalities. We do not say of His life or act, this is the special issue of the character and disposition of Christ, and this other is the clearly defined manifestation of the will of God. The obedience of Christ we feel to be the essential will of God, for that obedience is set forth in a moral nature and a spiritual character that is congruous with the character of God. This being the psychological and internal order of the spiritual facts, it throws the legal estimate of the words "commandment" and "obedience" under a new law or principle of interpretation, and that law or principle is found in the essential unity of the will of God and the mind of Christ. But the full significance of this order of interpretation comes more fully into the light, when we consider the entire passage as setting forth the law of the life of man in its organic and fundamental relations with Christ.

"I know His commandment is life everlasting", or as the revised version has it: "I know that His commandment is life eternal". The two terms of "life eternal", or "zoe-aionios", mutually qualify and define each other. Let us take the adjective first. Like all great words, "aionios" has its popular and its scientific meaning. It is a phrase not only of common speech, but of philosophical significance. In its primary meaning as used for a term of accurate thought and definition, it means that which is apart and above time. That is, the category of time has no relation whatever with it. It is neither a limitation nor an extension of the conception which is planted in the idea of time. Kant tells us that the categories of time and space are the necessary laws or conditions under which all knowledge of sensuous things, taking the term in its widest extension, must be attained. Now, I am not trying to introduce the Critical Philosophy into the Gospel of St. John, or smuggle Transcendental Ideas into the speech of Jesus, but I am using these distinctions in order to reach back to the fact that supersensuous facts, spiritual realities, ought not to be treated as lying under the same conditions of apprehension as those which belong to the physical phenomena or the ordinary mental processes of everyday life.

Only in its most popular and derivative uses does the term have a quantitative meaning. It specifically, and particularly in the Gospel of St. John, has a qualitative significance. "Eternal life" is a special kind of life that only in a loose and rhetorical way can we say admits of quantitative increase or decrease. Goodness is goodness always, and any increase in it means, not by dimensions or measurement, but by vividness, intensity and reality. Its character and its quality are always the same. It is with-

out succession. There was no time when goodness became goodness. It neither increases or decreases by age or term of years. So with all moral and spiritual facts. They are truths, and the reality of truths of this order lies in their quality and the energy with which they act in the world of man's spiritual nature. But the most important word in this phrase is "zoe". It occurs in the Gospel of St. John 34 times. It is generally recognized as one of the significant words in this Gospel. It is moreover almost never used to signify mere physical life or even mental activity. There are many ways in which we can approach it and find at least some phases of its meaning. As contrasted, for instance, with death, it means union and fellowship with God. For death is separation from Him; not separation in the sense of being outside of Him physically or metaphysically, but as having different moral ideals and spiritual purposes; an atmosphere in which the mind and will of God are not the prevailing and dominating characteristics. Outside of God, hence, means outside of the world of His spiritual life, His affection, love, purity, holiness. And not to have these as the contents of the soul is to be dead. There is only one life in the thought of Christ, and that is, God. The word is lifted to its highest significance. The pallid existence of men whose spiritual natures are stunted and dwarfed, in whose veins the sluggish flow of weak spiritual purposes hardly keeps alive the moral will of the man, is not life. It lacks that essential fulness and blessedness which are of the very essence of God's being, His perfect glory and our perfect joy. Now the fulness of life does not consist in our recognition of the fact. It is not the mere individual apprehension, the feeling of the presence of an existence in which the person has no part or share, but the divine life flows into the human life until the divine consciousness of its own character and sweetness and power become the consciousness of the individual soul that has become partaker of this life. The qualifying adjective "aionios" is not therefore a quantitative term, but rather a distinctly spiritual one. "Eternal life" is the qualitative essence of the character, not continuity or quantity of life. The adjective is used with the noun in this Gospel nine times and, without examining each passage in detail, we may assert without much danger of contradiction that it has this specifically spiritual meaning. Life is eternal, because in the first place it is life real and actual as no other life is. It intensifies the conception of life by showing its real and spiritual origin. We can the more readily see this inasmuch as the word or adjective, "eternal", in St. John's Gospel is only used with life. It is the distinctively qualifying adjective of that word. Eternal life is therefore the inseparable condition or accompaniment of the entrance into the real life of the spirit. It has no date, or rather, if it has, it is reckoned from the moment of entrance into Christ, or spiritual acceptance or inward appropriation of the Gospel as the matter is presented to us as a personal appropriation of Jesus Christ, or the inward consent of the nature to the law of His being. All adjectives represent qualities, and it is not a correct use of words to convert an attribute into a cause and say that eternity is what makes the life eternal. Nor, on

the other hand, is it possible to place the terms in the order of antecedent and consequent and affirm that life being in eternity it becomes partaker of its character. Further, we may affirm, that the acceptance of the Gospel does not confer eternal life. The matter is more closely and organically related. Eternal life is the subjective state represented by the objective statement of the knowledge of God or the reception of the Gospel. Christ is life. The reception of Christ or God is the actual acceptance of life. It is the dynamic activity of the Divine life that constitutes the life of the believer. "This is life eternal, that they might know God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent". The knowledge here is not used in any intellectual way whatever. It means that inward and spiritual recognition which is equivalent to the term "faith" in St. Paul. The contents of life, which are God and Christ, have nothing to do with the physical experiences of men. Death is not the beginning of eternal life, nor, on the other hand, is the resurrection the date of its origin. Christ had life in Himself from the very beginning.

He also gives life in giving Himself. It is this personal and immediate participation in eternal life which distinguishes the words of Christ in this Gospel from the conventional use of the phrase. "I know that His commandment is eternal life", Jesus says. Eternal life is, not shall be. It is the presence and the revelation of the Divine will in the life of man. But it is the life of man as consciously determined by the will of God, and the consciousness of its supreme beauty and truth. The moral and spiritual evidence of this beauty and truth are found by men in Jesus Christ, who is the incarnation of this holiness and love, grace and truth. These are His revelations, revelations not of Himself but of God. His Self is the expression of the Divine Self. The submission of the soul to Him, the obedience of the heart to His inward disposition, creates a new moral and spiritual consciousness. The union wrought out between the soul Christ loves and the soul that loves Christ is not a merely external union, but is like that which exists between the Father and the Son. In this blending or transforming of the inward consciousness issues the sense and certainty of Christ. So at the end, each through his own spiritual experience is able to affirm as a member of Christ that which Christ declares is the heart and meaning of His own life. "For I speak not from Myself: but the Father which sent Me, He hath given Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak, and I know that this commandment is life eternal: the things therefore, which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto Me, so I speak".



## \* THE WASHING OF THE DISCIPLES' FEET AND THE LAW OF SERVICE.

(ST. JOHN 13:1-17.)

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The event which we are to consider at this time, is one of very great importance. Largely so, if I mistake not, because it is the embodiment of a law that underlies all Christian civilization. We are to consider it of course as generic in kind and not specific. There are those I believe who actually do upon occasion wash one another's feet. I certainly would not be willing to question their Christianity as thus manifested, for I have the most profound respect for all who "profess and call themselves Christians"; but it seems to me we are to seek here the spirit rather than the letter, to discover the law embodied in the act rather than perceive the act alone.

The scene also marks the closing events in the history of our Lord's personal work on earth. The opening sentence of chapter 13, "Before the feast of the Passover", would preclude the thought that it is the Pascal supper that is being described. Neither could the action have taken place according to the King James' translation, "after supper was ended", neither as the Revision has it, "during supper", for it will readily be observed that at either time it would have been inopportune. Rather is the thought that supper time had arrived. In coming from the bath, probably with unsandled feet, they had become somewhat dusty again. According to the usual custom they found the basin of water prepared for them. It might have been the duty of the youngest disciple to perform this service, or possibly the one whose turn it was from the last meal, as was not unfrequently the case. A conversation had taken place, however, which turned the whole trend of things and presented to our Lord a most remarkable opportunity to impress a great lesson. So great was the lesson of service to mankind impressed upon him or from some other cause, that John omitted that most interesting story which to me seems the pivotal point of the Master's act.

For this we must turn to Luke, and there we have it in chapter 22, v. 24. Although they had traveled so much with the Lord and had so long listened to His teaching, they had as yet failed to grasp the meaning of greatness in His kingdom, and they had been contending who should be accounted the greater. By referring to Luke you will observe that Jesus had told them that one of them had it in mind to betray Him. This causes

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Professor Dods to remark, in regard to this strife among the disciples, that "the juxtaposition of this strife among the eleven with the announcement of the traitor gives to it by comparison the aspect of a pardonable infirmity in otherwise loyal men, and it is so treated by Jesus". If it were the custom of the younger to do the feet washing upon such occasions, we can see a very forceful meaning to the words of our Lord in Luke, when He said, "He that is the greater among you, let him become the younger, and he that is chief, as he that doth serve".

But it is not necessary for us to pause long over the interpretation of causes which led to the Saviour's action at this time. I think we will all agree that the great Teacher seized upon the circumstances to impress a lesson in serving for His disciples then and for all time to come. I think I can also observe that it was to be the key note to the highest type of all coming civilization. There is one predominant feature in Christianity, which, if I mistake not, differentiates it from all other religions, viz.: it has an ideal to which it is ever tending. You will recall that the Lord at one time remarked that His mission was not to destroy but to fulfil. The thought is that we have as it were the seeds of the future ideal in the old dispensation, and that He came to add new life and vigor that it might attain the ideal. To this end He bent the energies of His short life, and sought so to instruct His followers that they might carry on the same work. It is in this unfolding that we behold the beauty of this little story under consideration. If this new church was to look for a new kingdom, where were they to search for the foundations? In other words, what was to be the governing principle or law that was to control it?

When the time arrived when the most menial service was to be performed, with the conversation of dispute still ringing within His ears, He disrobes Himself according to custom, takes the basin of water and the towel and stoops to the humble work. When He had completed the washing and reinvested Himself with His garments and reclined with them at the table, He explained the meaning, and then added as recorded in v. 15, "For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you". Here, then, we behold the law of service, which is to be the law of all Christian civilization.

In this act the Leader, the acknowledged King, has shown by actual example what He rightfully expects of every subject. It needs but a cursory glance at His life from His entrance upon His mission to its completion, that service for others had been the rule of His own life, and why should He not expect it of those who were to be called by His name?

Before entering upon the application of this law in various modes of life, I wish to direct your attention to a few circumstances which to me seem very significant.

1. Our Lord was fully conscious that His end was near and that the shadow of the cross was dark athwart His pathway. This is indicated in the first verse of chapter 13, "Jesus knowing that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father".

Such times are usually occasions of ceasing from labor. He had done all He could to impress the grandeur of His mission upon the world, but had been repulsed at every point, and now His very life was to be required at the hand of His enemies; and what would seem to make the matter more serious, was the fact that at the very table with Him was the man who was to betray Him. But it was the last opportunity that was to present itself for impressing this great law upon their minds, and with that calmness and self poise always characteristic of the great Teacher, He faltered not.

2. I notice again that Jesus was conscious of His greatness. The third verse of this chapter reads, "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came forth from God, and goeth unto God", etc.

Consciousness of power, of divine power withal did not hinder Him in the performance of this service. Such being the case, He must have been aware that at His command He could have escaped the cross and have destroyed His enemies. Greatness and condescension are here brought face to face. None but the great could successfully face such difficulties. The act was the natural outcome of that greatness and not the greatness of the act. I presume many of us could recall deeds performed by men which of themselves were noble. These men may have done many such deeds, still no one considered them great men. Sinister motives seemed to lurk beneath the action depriving it of its apparent greatness. It is only when we keep in mind that the great purpose of Christ was to reveal the way of God to mankind, to show us the great Father-heart of God as exemplified in His own life that we can understand why when conscious of His divine origin and power He did not resent the manifold indignities so often manifested toward Him, and at once seek retribution. This has too often been the spirit shown by His followers. He might frequently have said to many of them, "Have I been so long with you and yet hast thou not known Me?" But as life or death were before Him it certainly must have been within His power to take either one or the other. From subsequent expressions we are to judge that life had its charms for the Holy One as it does for you or me. We must not be oblivious of His humanity when we exalt His divinity. But He also discovered the import of the law which He was about to emphasize, and for the moment turning His back upon His conscious greatness He performs the act under circumstances of the greatest trial.

3. The intensity of Jesus' love is worthy of attention. John of all the disciples seems to have most appreciated the loving heart of Jesus. It impresses him more. The only commandment of Christ which seems to impress John is that of love. In his first epistle (4:21), he thus writes: "And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also". Then when writing to the "elect lady", he refers to a commandment which they had had from the beginning, and that commandment was love to one another. God's love thus manifested through the Son was a constant wonder to John. "What manner of love" he exclaims. By this the Apostle sees that we are called the "sons of God". In his Gospel,



in the very beginning, he declares that it was love that brought Christ to the world, and that belief in Him would bring the life eternal. Not content with such assertions he rises to the more wonderful declaration that "God is love", and that he that would abide in God must abide in love (1 John 4: 8, 16). I suppose that the assertion that God is love is a description rather of the character than of the being of God. One has well said, I think, that "this truth was for John a simple conclusion from the mission and work of Jesus. It was the inference regarding the unseen from the seen".\*

We are unable to fathom the immense influence that the act of feet-washing by our Lord had upon the "beloved disciple". The statement in the first verse of the chapter under consideration is significant: "Having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end". The words "His own" must be considered in a little more restricted sense than the same words in the first chapter and eleventh verse. Here it would seem that He is referring to that little band of twelve whom He had selected for their instruction in taking up the work which He was soon to leave in person. If this be accepted, it will make it a little more interesting. We commend the love of God in Jesus Christ for the race, but when we realize that the love is for the individual, that very concentration makes it more valuable.

I think our admiration of Jesus' love and for the menial act is heightened and deepened when we remember that he who was to betray Him was in their company and received this service from the hand of his Master. It had already been put into Judas' heart to betray. I cannot quite agree with Meyer that Satan put it into his own heart, for it was his intention to destroy the work of the Son of God from the beginning. The Saviour knew full well at that time who was to betray Him, that he was already pondering it within his heart, and yet despite this, He loved him and yearned for his soul. Our Lord saw the events about to transpire, and yet, His

"Love alters not with His brief hours and weeks,  
But He bears it even to the edge of doom".

II. *The Washing of the Feet.* We now come to the distinguishing act of that eventful hour. The act of that occasion was but another illustration of the law of service which the great Teacher had at all times sought to enforce. You will remember that John and James, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him upon a certain occasion seeking important positions in His coming kingdom, but that without attempting to disabuse them of their error in regard to the character of that kingdom, He at once showed them that for the attainment of that or any position in His kingdom, there was service to be done. It matters little which Greek word is used which we translate "service" or any of its derivatives; He at all times seeks to impress the thought that we must serve humanity and thereby we are serving God.

Recall for a moment the scene of the 12th chapter of this Gospel.

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\* Gilbert: "Interpretations", p. 313.

Certain Greek philosophers had been seeking an interview with the Lord. This little band of Greeks were well versed in their own mythology, and taking advantage of this, Jesus made use of an illustration probably based on the Eleusinian mystery, and by it they were enabled to comprehend the teaching of the coming of a new life from an old or former life. They were perfectly familiar with the legend of Dionysus, his second birth with Semele as his mother, and acquainted with the myth of Persephone. From these came the symbol of vegetation shooting up with such verdure at spring time, and apparently withdrawing into the earth as autumn approaches. When, therefore, the Teacher used the illustration of v. 24 they understood its meaning. "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die it abideth alone". Then followed what would have been a paradox without the preceding assertion, "he that loveth his life loseth it". Here is the law of service taught which our Lord is about to illustrate to His disciples and finally to the world. If you have no service to render, no death to die, you will remain alone, would seem to be the thought there expressed.

You well know, as the margin indicates, that for the word here translated "life", two different words appear in the Greek. If you are anxious to keep your individual life, your manhood, you must be willing to sacrifice it in doing good for others. This done, you will gain the life eternal.

This He failed not to apply to Himself as He beheld the darkening athwart His pathway. Although He did say "Father, save Me from this hour", He immediately exclaimed: "For this cause came I unto this hour". He felt then, as ever, that His life was one of service for humanity, even unto the death of the cross.

Let us take, if you will, that wonderful parable known as that of the Good Samaritan. It has been an inspiration for hundreds of years to all Christendom. Orders have been formed upon it as a ruling principle, and charitable institutions have received their life from it as a foundation. It is within the very warp and woof of all working Christianity. But what does it record? A little act of service whose immediate teaching is to reveal the meaning of neighbor, but whose ultimate end is to teach us that that neighbor needs our service.

The principal record of the eleventh chapter is the raising of Lazarus, but the ground thought for us to learn is that Christ *served* in that hour of trouble. But to me one of the greatest representations of this law of service by way of teaching is given by the great Leader in His description of the judgment. They are represented as coming to Him after He has told them that they are to inherit the kingdom prepared for them. So greatly are they astonished that they are represented as crying out to Him: "When did we do this? We have no remembrance of seeing Thee in such condition and ministering unto Thee". The answer is significant. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, My brethren, even the least, ye did it unto Me".

To me it has seemed that Jesus illustrated all these teachings by the feet-washing. It would almost appear that He might have said to His fol-

lowers, "You have been with Me for a long while now. You have heard what I have said about service in the world. I have been seeking to show you that it lay at the very foundation of all greatness. It is at the very entrance of My kingdom and you must understand what it means. You are all seeking greatness in that kingdom. You are thinking as did the lawyer, 'What good thing may I do?' I can say no more. I want you to scan My life, it has been one of service from the beginning. You must allow Me to wash your feet as the symbol of what I mean". After saying this they saw the light, and Peter cried out, "Lord, not my feet only, but my hands and my head".

In this act shines the light of which Professor Beardslee spoke, "The study of Christ's mission, if it follows the lead of John, will center around one word,—light. Christ is the light of the world". So here He becomes our light, and there is no need of walking in darkness.

I might emphasize here the value of doing over feeling, I have known people to wander in the dark for weeks and all because so much stress was placed on "how do you feel", and when the candidate could claim no better feeling he was told he must feel a little worse, plead a little more, and then he might feel a little better. Just what this meant, or just what was the process through which he was to pass was never made quite plain, but it was fully taught that his acceptance depended largely on feeling.

The teaching of Christ, so far as I am able to see, calls upon us first to do something for God, and the feeling will naturally follow. It will be observed that the Master was constantly telling men to give, even if it were but a cup of cold water to the thirsty, as well as many other things, and when they had done these righteous things in the name of Christ or because they had accepted Him as their guide they would receive the righteous man's reward. Feeling will undoubtedly follow in a majority of cases, but we are to do something first and consider the feeling as a result.

*Application of the Law.*—If the act of feet-washing embodied a law, as I have already stated to be my belief, it must be universally applied. When we studied arithmetic or the higher mathematics, it was the custom to state the rule and then illustrate it by some appropriate example. But in reality, although I do not remember that the teachers told us so, the rule of course followed from the example. It could not be otherwise. So here from the great Teacher we have first the example, and from that follows the rule. You have observed that the disciples wanted to know why He should do this act, and He told them to allow the act, and He would afterward explain. This was also the case at the time of the baptism of Jesus, when John was about to forbid His coming to him, "Suffer it to be so now", was the answer, waiting for subsequent developments to substantiate the assertion, "It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness".

1. *Nations.* The law must be applied to nations in their dealings with each other.

This was the one great lapse in the grasp of thought among the Hebrews. Accept to the full extent that they were a "chosen people",



that God had given them a revelation superior to what had been received by the nations about them, they never seemed to comprehend the fact that such privileges demanded a service on their part to their neighbors. They grew to be more and more exclusive, and finally thought no one was fit for existence but their own nation. It would seem that they were sufficiently warned of this fault of exclusiveness. There are those who believe that the story of Jonah was written to show them the larger opportunities which they might embrace, but the "hermit" thought possessed them so thoroughly that it controlled them to the days of the promised Messiah. If we are to follow out this law there can be no hermit nations.

In our time this law is manifesting itself nationally in reciprocity treaties. It may be doubtful if the greedy politician recognizes the source or feels its full import when he is arguing such national measures, but it is most certainly an exhibition of serving one another.

In the same category must be classed the boards of arbitration, of which we hear so much in this century.

You may recall that President Woolsey, in his "Introduction to the Study of International law", says that the Roman Imperial Power originally fulfilled this function, and that it was feebly perpetuated by the popes in the mediæval times. Henry IV of France sought by some such means to avert religious wars, and so on through the succeeding years it has been the strenuous efforts of many national leaders to confederate the nations in such a manner that war might be averted and the weaker nations preserved. It was reserved for those living at the close of the nineteenth century to witness a mighty nation espousing the cause of a despised people, fighting their battles for them, and then raising them to the honor and dignity of statehood among the nations of the earth. I opine, however, that the world has not yet seen the full outcome of the application of the law of service among nations. I contend, without approving or disapproving of recent methods, or without entering the arena of politics at all, that it is a service which this country has owed to all the nations of the earth for more than a half century to construct and maintain a waterway across the Isthmus of Panama. I also maintain that all intercourse of one nation with another should be based on this Christ Law of Service. It would not be politic to study this law at this time in all its ramifications in these directions, neither is there time; but if ever any nation attains to the highest possible Christian civilization, it will only be by accepting and working upon Christ's Law of Service.

One has well said, "That the principle of service sees the world no longer as divided, fragmentary, a disconnected series of spheres \* \* \* but as one world, an organism, a cosmos, a single sphere in which is no higher or lower, no academic aristocracy or detached group of the learned, but an interdependent, associated, common life, involving the researches of the recluse and the bent back of the man with the hoe".\*

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\* Professor Peabody: "The Religion of an Educated Man", p. 81.

2. *Literature.* This brings us naturally to the application of the law of service to literature.

Possibly there is no better illustration than the service of literature rendered to England in the middle of the last century. It was one of the great factors which assisted in bringing about the great revolution without recourse to arms. Carlyle seemed to catch the spirit of the law and was willing to apply it to himself. Those were immortal words which he wrote, and worthy of inscription in gold and to be placed in the sanctum sanctorum of every aspirant in literature:

"We are here to do God's will. The only key to a right life is self-renunciation. The man who lives for self, who works for selfish ends is a charlatan at bottom, no matter how great his powers. The man who lives for self alone has never caught a vision of the true meaning and order of the universe. \* \* \* Life shall be a barren, worthless thing for me unless I seek to fall in with God's plan, and do the work that He has sent me here to do".

Scarcely less important are the words of that noble Italian patriot who providentially sojourned an exile in England at that time, and who espoused the cause of liberty of that strange land: Joseph Mazini. He wrote: "Life is a mission. Every other definition of life is false and leads all who accept it astray. \* \* \* Life is a mission, a duty, therefore its highest law. In the comprehension of that mission, and fulfilment of that duty, lies our means of future progress, the secret of the stage of existence into which we shall be initiated at the conclusion of this earthly stage".

What could be truer to the law of service than the expression of these two leaders in the literature of their times. But they were not the only ones who used their pens for what to them seemed for the good and exaltation of their country and their fellow men. If you are at all familiar with Mazini's life (*Joseph Mazini, His Life, Writings, Etc.* pp. 129-200), you will recall that it was not enough for him to be engaged in these public benefactions in the cause of liberty. Finding that there were hundreds of Italian children in London who were extremely ignorant, his great loving heart was so moved that he induced men of means to assist in founding a school for their instruction.

At this period Charles Dickens was just entering upon his career, which was to make him one of the foremost instrumentalities in bringing light to darkest England. Elizabeth Barrett, Thomas Hood and a host of others were heard in verse and prose sounding the note of freedom; legislators heard the cry of humanity and consecrated their pens to its services.

It is impossible for one to trace the far-reaching influence that the true literate has had in moulding and fashioning society. There are no more hopeful signs of the times than the fact that such men as Ely, and Vincent, and Zeublen and many other men of letters have been willing to use their pens and time in what is termed the Citizen's Library Economics, Politics and Sociology, whose aim is to make scientific work in the field of the humanities clear and interesting to ordinary intelligent citizens. And I

doubt if the world ever saw the day when so many of our men of education, college presidents and professors, noted clergymen and leaders of society offered themselves in free service for all mankind. Never were so many books published, and good ones, too, to help the rising generation. I well remember when "Todd's Students' Manuel" was not only the best but about the only book of its kind, but now it is not so. Almost every man of any standing in literature gives us the benefit of his education. You can well imagine my chagrin the other day when your secretary asked me what books I had written. All I could do was to remark, in the language of the celebrated Dr. Daniel Curry, that I know too much to write a poor one but not enough to write a good one. I rejoice that so many educated men are consecrating their knowledge and pens for the public good.

4. *The Church.* We now ask ourselves the question, what service shall the church render to humanity? The day of controversy has very nearly passed. Heresy is little thought of except now and then when the superior light of some noted professor shines so brightly that it blinds our eyes and we think he is in the dark when, forsooth, it is ourselves, and we wish to try him for heresy. But, generally, all is at peace and the church stands confronted with tremendous problems.

You may recall that Canon Fremantle\* claims that the fourth and fifth chapters of John's Revelation reveals the ideal or destination of the church of God. In the center is the slain lamb, that is God made known through the self-renouncing love expressed in the cross of Christ. Surrounding these are the elders representing the redeemed humanity, then the four living beings which represent the animate creation. He claims that we must take this vision as representing a world right about us, and not far away, that is being slowly but steadily transformed by the expansion of the Christian church. Whatever definition we may give to the church, its mission is *a service for humanity*. As Christ came to the multitudes to help them, so are we to go to the multitudes in His stead today and render them the service we are able to give.

I wish especially to call your attention to the latter part of v. 15, and the whole of v. 16. They seem to me to be significant:—"That ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, I say unto you, a servant is not greater than his lord: neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him" This of course will be seen to refer directly to the scene of washing that has just transpired. Turn now if you will to v. 34, and there you will read:—"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another". It would almost seem that the great Exemplar paused for a moment to get their attention, for what He was about to say was what there was new in this commandment. Their attention riveted upon Him, He continues:—"Even as I have loved you, that ye love one another".

The word "even" denotes conformity rather than a simple comparison. Their love, to be forever manifested, is to be of the same nature.

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\* Fremantle: "The World a Subject of Redemption", p. 8.



The two ways of rendering this passage are: 1. "I give you a new commandment, that ye love one another with the same devotion with which I have loved you". 2. "I give you a new commandment, that ye love one another, even as up to this moment I loved you, in order that you may imitate My love one toward another".\* While the first rendering gives the *character*, the second rendering gives the *ground* of that mutual Christian love. The revised version gives this in the margin. That love which was to be the characteristic of the new commandment was on that occasion manifested in the act which at first Peter so strenuously deplored.

Indeed He had manifested His superiority, not only to them, but His superiority to the age in which He was living. His words so fitly spoken at all times; His self control under the most trying circumstances; His fearlessness, yet gentleness of bearing had all disclosed to them that superiority, while now the closing act of His short life had clearly demonstrated to them that He was willing to use that transcendent greatness in lifting the race to its rightful position. His very coming to the earth, His denial of the glory which He had with the Father, would and did demonstrate this; but they could not then understand that any more clearly than we do now, and so to give the example that all might understand, He stoops to the menial service of washing the disciples' feet.

We sometimes hear the cry, "give us the old time religion", and it is doubtful, if many who are sounding this through the land understand what it means. Mr. Ely in one of his lectures† says that while the metaphysicians are crying:—"Back to Kant!" or "Back to Plato!" let the church raise the cry:—"Back to Christ!" This is what I understand by the "old time religion", and not one of noise and emotionalism. It may, and will to a certain degree possess both of these, but it will be because the church, Christian people are willing to bring aid as Christ did to the degraded humanity by being its servant.

In the light of this interpretation, there is a place for every follower of Jesus Christ, and when he is out of that place, he is of no use to the world. If one has gained education beyond one's fellows, it is the imperative duty for that one to use it among the ignorant or those who are not as enlightened. The thanks of this whole land, yea, of the whole Christendom, are due to President Eliot and a score of other men of like character, who, in the plenitude of their research are willing to meet their opponents on social questions in open fair debate.

It certainly has a tendency of removing the "caste" feeling which our Lord so greatly deplored, and which the act before us so greatly wounded. We are living in an age of service, a service of love for mankind, and it is the opinion of many eminent men that it has never been equaled in its comprehensive love of man. The rich are beginning to realize as never before that wealth means more than self-aggrandizement. It means that they, as

\* Vincent: "Word Studies in the New Testament", p. 236.

† Ely: "Social Aspects of Christianity", p. 149.

its possessors, are but stewards to do service for humanity, and so the last year surpassed all others in its gifts of beneficence. In this renaissance appears the Young Men's Christian Association, the University Settlements, the Students' Volunteer movement and other methods of helping humanity, all of which show that we are catching the spirit of Christ when He laid aside His garments, and He took a towel and girded Himself, and poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet.

I believe with Dr. Rice that "the Man of Nazareth has still a message even for those who rejoice in the discovery and possession of the new worlds of truth revealed by modern science".\*

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\* Professor Rice: "Christian Faith in an Age of Science", p. 6.

## \* THE GLORIFICATION OF THE SON OF MAN.

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ST. JOHN 13:31, 32.

"Now is glorified the Son of Man,  
And God is glorified in Him;  
And God shall glorify Him in Himself,  
And straightway shall He glorify Him".

ST. JOHN 17:5.

"And now glorify Thou Me, Father, with Thyself,  
By the glory which before the world was I had with Thee".

I. As we pass on in the study of St. John's Gospel, we see more and more distinctly how the beloved disciple was led to know the Master and to interpret and record His works. Especially as we come under the shadow of the cross and catch a glimpse of the light which lies beyond it, we see how one of whom we think as most closely following and understanding the Lord, learned the meaning of the great revelation of the life, the death, and the life resumed. He saw in it all, as he traced it out from the beginning, a great progress from God to God, of one who came forth from the Father and came into the world, and again left the world and went unto the Father. A later Apostle noted the steps of humiliation from the assumption of human nature to the acceptance of the death of the cross, and then as following upon this the exaltation to the right hand of the Father; and as he wrote, St. Paul thought of the glory as a compensation for the humiliation and a reward of the obedience. Such, indeed, from the standpoint of man it was, and in this way the facts are doubtless rightly represented to our minds and rightly understood. But St. John looked at these same events as he knew that Christ Himself looked at them, and he saw them in the light of the divine plan and counsel; and in their Godward aspect he learned that the cross was not an interruption of the great work, nor was the Resurrection an undoing of the power of the death, or even a recompense for it; from Bethlehem to Olivet, nay, as I was saying, from God to God, it was a great progress, the triumphal march of a combatant and conqueror, the revelation of the inherent glory of the Son of God, the assumption of the merited glory of the Son of Man. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself"; the Lord spoke these

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\* Delivered at the Sixth Conference, held at the Trinity Union Methodist Episcopal Church, March 9, 1904.



words as He entered into the last tremendous conflict, and He spoke them, St. John himself tells us, "signifying by what death He was about to die"; but the "lifting up" was not upon the cross alone; it was that, indeed, but it was that as a step in the ascent to the Father. And, in point of fact, it is not the Christ dead upon the cross who has drawn and still draws humanity to His worship and obedience; it is the Christ in heaven, "the Lamb as it had been slain", the accepted sacrifice, the living priest, the head over all things to the church.

And this expression of one of the greatest of all truths, although we find it most clearly stated in the argument and the words of St. John's Gospel, is not peculiar to him. St. Luke, when entering upon his long record of the events of our Lord's last journey to Jerusalem, says that He steadfastly set His face thitherward "when the time was come that He should be received up"; so that he, too, looked upon the way of the cross as the way of glory. And there are many phrases which show that even St. Paul wrote sometimes more like a mystic than like a scholastic theologian, and centering his thoughts upon God saw the one great plan which was purposed from eternal ages, not interrupted but furthered by the cross.

Thus, indeed, it must have been for all who entered into the full meaning of the Lord's teaching about Himself. They saw the childhood, the youth, the opening manhood of the holy Man follow in the wonderful naturalness of perfection; there was no change of purpose, no break of continuity, when upon them there followed the public ministry with its gracious teaching and its deeds of love, its conflicts with sin and error, its mighty testimony to this truth; and they saw that it was a step to the greatest victory when the life submitted to death that it might gain new power, that it might enter upon a loftier state of existence, and that it should then be communicated to those who could receive it. Christ Jesus lived and taught, suffered and died, that He might attain and impart the new life.

Thus it was that when, His earthly ministry having ended, He had dedicated Himself to death, He knew and declared that He had reached the time of His glorification. He had shown Himself to be the Lamb without blemish and without spot; He had, before the hands of wicked men had been violently laid upon Him, devoted Himself to death when He presented to the Father the bread and the wine of the last Paschal feast and the first Eucharist, or at least—for we cannot be certain of the exact sequence of events—He was about to offer this great sacrifice of Himself and to bid His disciples to continue a memorial of it until He should come again; Judas had left that little company, in which he no longer had his place, and had gone out into the night to fulfil the awful part which he had chosen for himself; and Jesus said to the eleven who were left, waiting in hope and fear for what might prove the issues of that night, "Now is the Son of Man glorified". A day or two before, when the conflict with His own people was at its height, and Gentiles had come to ask for Him, He had said that the hour of His glorification was at hand; but now the sacrifice was in true

symbol and in full intent offered, or to be offered, and the Lord spoke of the act as just completed: "Now was glorified the Son of Man".

II. "The Son of Man". Thus He spoke of Himself, as showing the place which He held in the great economy of the Father, declaring His identity with humanity and His place as the head of humanity, affirming that He was really man and at the same time representatively man, not one among men but one who was the life of all, who was the one real man because He was the one ideal man. And He, the Son of Man, was now ready to receive a glory such as had never reached humanity before. He saw before Him the agony in the garden and the bloody sweat; He knew how near to Him were the cross and the passion, with all that they meant of shame and pain, of contempt and dereliction; but He saw beyond them, and—most important—because of them, the mighty resurrection and the glorious ascension, the enthronement in heaven and the kingly return; He knew, too, that this was the true way—we need not hesitate to say the natural way—in which He, the Son of Man, was to complete His work and to attain His destined place; and He uttered in the hearing of His apostles words which they could not rightly understand then, but words which it was impossible that they should forget:

"Now was glorified the Son of Man,  
And God was glorified in Him;  
And God shall glorify Him in Himself,  
And straightway shall He glorify Him".

These were not, then, the words of a perfect man who, coming to the end of his appointed work, felt that he might expect a reward. Even the perfect man must, indeed,—paradoxical as it may seem—advance in his perfection. Even the perfect man must meet the conditions of advance in physical and mental and spiritual development, and must prove his place and stand forth as being that which he really is. Even the perfect man must be perfect because he has become perfect, and none can be made perfect without trials and sufferings. And Jesus Christ was certainly perfect as man, and His humanity was made perfect. •None before Him had ever attained to unspotted holiness, as none before Him had ever offered complete obedience. He stood pre-eminent among all who have ever trod this earth in the many generations of its history, and as such there must have been a glory especially and peculiarly His. That glory, if I understand the record aright, was shown to Him on one memorable occasion; and had He been no more than man, had He been but one among the millions of human kind, He might have accepted it as His due and have entered upon it then. On the holy mount, when not only His life of preparation was past, but also He had received the discipline and made the progress which belonged to His public ministry, His glory was revealed to chosen men of both the ancient and the new dispensation, and also (I think we may rightly say it) to Himself. That glory our Lord did not then accept, and its vision faded away; but it left in the memory and the convictions of two apostles who.

saw it—the other early laid down his life and left no record of his teaching—a powerful testimony as to the reality and the might of their Master's majesty, whom they had for a brief moment seen as indeed He was and is. But the Lord came down from the mount, and entered again and at once upon His work as the healer of men's woes, and presently upon His other work as teacher and His conflict with sin. He accepted not the transfiguration glory which belonged to Him as man, because He would await and in due time gain the resurrection glory, which should be His as the Son of Man. The hour was not yet come that the Son of Man should be glorified.

III. Now the reason for this, as I understand it, is two-fold; or, to speak more accurately, it is a reason which can be stated and considered in two ways. Our Lord at the time of the transfiguration had accomplished the work of man, as man might have been had there been no need of redemption. He had, indeed, encountered sin, and had known its opposition, and had removed some of its results; but He had not delivered men from its power, nor had He as yet known in His own experience the uttermost of the power of that which He had come to bear. If the words are rightly understood, it may be said that He had fulfilled the destiny of man unfallen, but not as yet that of man fallen. For, though He knew no sin, and the stain and corruption incurred by human nature did not reach to Him, yet He was sent "in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin"; and it was necessary that His holiness should reach down and take hold of the weakness and sin of those whom He vouchsafed to call His brethren. To help man fallen, He must humble Himself to the destiny of man fallen; and that He would not have done if He had accepted the glory of perfect manhood and entered the presence of the Father from the mount of the transfiguration. And this really implies the other reason which I had in mind, that even in the supreme hour of His ministry, regarded as only His ministry, Christ had not identified Himself with us; He had not become the head of the church, and through the church the head of mankind. The life of no mere man, be he even the man who alone should be perfect among the children of men, could be communicated to all others as the one source of their true life. None but a mere man could have accepted a glory which was not to be shared with others; none but the Son of Man could have left the vision of the spiritual world and of the eternal life, and calmly faced the evils and sorrows that remained on earth, and turned His steps to Gethsemane and Calvary, even though it was with sure faith that through them a path would be found to the opened grave and the parted heavens. Christ our Lord, because He was the Son of Man, must needs seek to tread as deliverer the way along which man, weak and fallen, was stumbling, and He must needs gain for man a life not only perfect but victorious; and life completely victorious—we may be not able to give the reason, but we are convinced of the truth—is the only high life which is by its nature communicable to others and able to extend to all. And no life is completely victorious except that which bows itself down to death and rises again in the might of the resurrection.



IV. Transfiguration glory was therefore not all that was meet for the Son of Man. Because He was the Son of Man, He would not accept that which could not be shared with His brethren; because He was the Son of Man, He would not enter into glory without us. He came back into this world's life that He might take us with Himself into the life of the world to come. How, then, was He to be glorified as the Son of Man?

The answer has been already in part suggested; but that it may be truly stated and apprehended, we must keep in our minds the full meaning of glory as the word is used constantly in the Scriptures.

Glory is the manifestation of that which has a moral worth; it belongs only to that which is in itself real and true; it is the necessary effulgence of light, the revelation of true excellence, that by which a rational being recognizes in a rational being the qualities of holiness and reality, of justice and love, and of all that goes to make up moral and spiritual perfection. It is thus essential to the nature of that to which it belongs and which it reveals; it may be hindered in its manifestation, but it cannot be created and it cannot be destroyed. It follows that it is not, and cannot be, something extraneous, as a golden crown which may be put upon an unworthy head, or a stately garment which may be used to cover up rags and unseemliness; glory, in any right sense of the word, is as necessary to him in whom it is seen as is brightness to the sun, or beauty to the flower, or order to the system of the universe. And in a true sense we may say that God Himself does not bestow glory. We do not, of course, mean that He does not first create that which is noble and pure and true; we do not for a moment deny that it is His hand which shapes and His spirit which gives life to all that has perfection of any kind, or that even makes any approach to perfection; but as He did not first create the sun or the flower or the world, and then give to each its attribute of brightness or beauty or order, but made each to show in itself that which belonged to its very constitution, so it is in regard to that moral excellence of which we are speaking; it does of very necessity reveal itself, it cannot but be glorious. The glory of God is His holiness and His love, those two elements which specially enter into our thought of what we venture to call His character; and the holy and loving God must needs have the glory which enters into any true conception of holiness and love, a glory which none can fail to see and recognize who knows these divine attributes. In like manner, the glory of a man is in his character as he is true to that which he was created to be and to the ideal toward which he was meant to advance; and even with our bodily eyes we catch traces of it on the faces of the saints, and our souls are conscious of it when we are in their presence. So the glory of the Son of Man is to be seen in the completion of His work, in the perfection which He was to attain through life and death and life again, through obedience and its reward, by completing as Son of Man His double service, that of the Father and that of His brethren.

The words, then, on the Lord's lips, "Now is the Son of Man glorified", declared that He had as Son of Man finished His work here and had fulfilled

the destiny of man on earth. They witnessed to the completion of that for which He had cast in His lot with those whom, though fallen and sinful, He had from very love called to become His brethren. Dedicating Himself to death, and accepting the path of life along which alone He could lead man with Himself, He had made that great act of self-surrender which was the only way of true victory for Him and for us, and had acknowledged that in this He would find His sufficient reward. The inward victory had been gained in the surrender of the holy will to do and to suffer all that man needed to accomplish and to endure; and upon the inward victory, so the Lord knew, the outward triumph must follow.

Thus, as in one great act, the Son of Man was glorified by life and by death, by resurrection and ascension, and is yet to be glorified by that return for which His church is waiting. Thus in the self-surrender and the deserved exaltation, a death accepted because only through it could life be attained, life possible only as springing out of death, did He who had for our sakes identified Himself with us fulfil His destiny and ours. Thus did He gain His true reward, the reward of greater service and of greater consequent honor, the ability to serve us by giving us His resurrection life as He had given for us the life in which He lived on earth. Thus, to use His own words, was He glorified, and God was glorified in Him; for in His work was a new revelation of the Father, made known in His wonderful perfections of holiness and love; and thus was fulfilled that which He added by way of emphasis and assurance, "God shall glorify Him in Himself, and straightway shall He glorify Him". They are words rather for devout meditation than for critical examination and exposition; and marvellously do they tell us of the eternal Son of God, as Son of Man, bringing glory to the Father, and the Father glorifying His only begotten Son, when His work as Son of Man was completed, in Himself.

And somewhat thus may we venture to apprehend the meaning of the petition which I read at the beginning from the Lord's high-priestly prayer; "Now glorify Thou Me, Father, by the glory which before the world was I had with Thee". The words in which the eternal Son, who had come forth from the Father, addressed the eternal Father to whom He was about to return, must needs be words above the full understanding of men; but they do at least contain the prayer, which on the Lord's lips was a prayer in full assurance that it was the Father's will that it should be fulfilled—the prayer that He who had been made and had become the Son of Man, might in His perfection as the God-Man, uniting in His one Person two natures never to be divided, have the glory which belonged to the God-head; that the glory which before the Incarnation had been His, might be given Him as the Incarnate Son, who by the depth of His humiliation and the completeness of His obedience had gained for Himself the name that is above every name, and for man the privilege of becoming the son of God and even partaker of the divine nature. What one says in trying to grasp the meaning of these great words must needs be said after the manner of men and most imperfectly; but the thought

inspired may lead to worship and to that lofty faith which is the spring of all true action.

V. Thus, as He had declared and as He had prayed, the Son of God, made Son of Man, was glorified by the Father as in the path of the Cross He entered upon the life which had hitherto been the uncommunicated life of the Godhead, to make it communicable to men. Thus did He gain a victory, not for Himself alone, but for all who should be in Him, for His body the church, and for all humanity. Thus did He not only point out the way of man's perfection, but prove it a real thing; thus did He make it possible for us to enter into His perfection and into His glory.



\* OBEDIENCE TO THE NEW COMMANDMENT THE PROOF OF  
DISCIPLESHIP.

(ST. JOHN 13:34, 35.)

BY REV. ROCKWELL H. POTTER,

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BRETHREN IN THE CONFERENCE: You have asked me to speak upon the words found in the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of John in the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth verses, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another". Those who have read thoughtfully these chapters of the Gospel will have noted that the chapter division which concludes the thirteenth and opens the fourteenth chapter of the Gospel gives to us at the opening of the fourteenth chapter those great words of comfort which are dear to the heart of every Christian. Yet it is unhappy in that it separates those words of Jesus from the other words in His answer to the question of Peter, and that it separates the related questions of Thomas and Philip and Judas from the question of Peter. They will have noted that the real division of the thought occurs at the thirty-sixth verse of the thirteenth chapter with the first of the interrupting questions. So we see these verses to which our thought is called this evening standing as Jesus' own word at the conclusion of the institution of the Lord's Supper and as His only introduction to the great words of the fifteenth to the seventeenth chapters—the discourse of the vine and His prayer for the church. So that I bring to you one of His great words spoken at a great moment in His ministry.

The supper had been instituted. That simple yet profound ceremony summed up in itself great Christian truths that laid hold of the thought and heart of the group of disciples. At its close in that tragic moment Jesus had made the delicate disclosure of him who should betray Him, and the steps of Judas had just died away as he had descended the stair from the upper room. It is as though we had crossed the passion threshold and were now in the great and holy place wherein was to be enacted the sublime mystery of the Christian faith—as though the traitor being unable to pass that threshold having just departed, had left behind him the group of the disciples whose hearts were loyal to Jesus and to whom could be disclosed the great and eternal truths which were then to be wrought out. So

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\* Delivered at the Sixth Conference, held at the Trinity Union Methodist Episcopal Church, March 9, 1904.

Jesus speaks now the word which is to be the constituting principle of the Christian church. The supper being concluded He speaks of the glorification of the Son of Man which is to be wrought in Him, speaking of His relation to God. Then He speaks of the Church through which He is to be glorified, and announces the principle which is to constitute that Church in human society — the principle which is to organize human society so that the great work to which He has laid His hand shall find its full fruition in the brotherhood of man. This then is His word. "A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another, as I have loved you; that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, because ye have love one for another".

What then is the content of this great commandment which is to become the organizing principle of the Christian Church? What then is the content of this commandment by which men are to be known as His disciples? We read the word, "that ye love one another", and we recognize that this is no new word falling from the lips of Jesus. The disciples had already heard that message. Time and time again had He repeated the ancient command of Israel in their ears. Moreover, in the parable of the Good Samaritan He had given such large interpretation to the word neighbor that they understood something of the breadth of the love that was demanded of them by Jesus. What then constitutes this command, "A *new* commandment?" Wherein is it that Jesus speaks these words on the threshold of His passion? Wherein is it that, reserving this word for this moment, He speaks of it and says, "This is the *new* command"? "I have stated many things. If you forget other things which I have said, forget not this. I have given many precepts. If these all fall from your lives, let not this fall. This is *the* commandment". What does He mean? Let us divest our thought of those unworthy conceptions that cluster around these words. A large part of the meaning of the passage we are apt to lose. We love so many things. We speak of that which is beautiful to the artistic sense and say that we love it because it is a delight to the eye, or pleasant to the ear, or because in deeper meaning it satisfies the æsthetic impulses of the soul. Again, with more of real meaning we say of our friend, "I love him; he is my companion, my trusted friend, I love him". Yet we know that love such as this cannot be commanded. Or leaving behind the lower meanings of the word, we apply it to that range of affection upon which the home is constituted, the love of husband for wife, of father for son, the love of the mother for her child, and by this word we cover all the range of those sacred relationships which constitute the home and give unto life the sweetness and richness which there is in the home we know. And yet, when we strive to interpret these words by these usages of it, we find that it is impossible for us to derive from it the significance of the text. We cannot be commanded so to love all men, we cannot be commanded so to love our brethren in the Christian Church. These affections which are the center and bond of union in the home, are not the range of affections that are brought into play in the Christian brotherhood.

They cannot be commanded, and our Lord never laid that commandment upon us. How then shall we interpret these words but by reading more closely, and by comparing this word here with those in the parable of Jesus by which He has borne it in upon the heart of humanity? We love our neighbor when we, like the good Samaritan, are willing not to pass by on the other side but to go where he is, and put the arm of sympathy under his wounded head, and to lift him in his weakness to the bosom of our strength, and to pour the balm of comfort into his wounds, and to bear him to safety and shelter. We find that we love our neighbor when thus we seek his good,—that Jesus does not command for us a passionate affection, that He does not command us to find the man robbed and at once feel towards him as we feel towards our brother in the flesh; but that we enter into his life with sympathy and seek his welfare and minister unto him in love. So Jesus means in this great word, “that ye love one another”, as He means always in the interpretation of that great word to Israel. Jesus means, when He says you should love one another, “seek always the welfare of your brother”. Consistently in life and word, in deed and thought, seek the welfare of that brother. “Ah”, you say, “you have taken the meaning out of that great word, what is there left in it?” Have I? Then you have never striven to live up to that commandment; take it home and live up to it in Providence for one week, and see if the meaning is gone from it when I say that Jesus says we shall always seek the welfare of our brother man. This is the commandment that Jesus lays upon the heart of the Christian Church, and He utters the great and fundamental law of redeemed human society.

But He has given us here the phrase that makes His word the *new* commandment, “Love one another as I have loved you”. And so saying, He has given us the type and measure of the Christian obligation. “As I have loved you”. How loved He men? Spiritually first, spiritually, always spiritually. But you say, “He fed the hungry, He clothed the naked, He unstopped the deaf ears, and He caused light to shine in the eyes of the darkened, He made the lame to walk and the dead to live; His ministry was a physical ministry”. Yes, He fed the hungry, but He said to them, “Ye seek Me because you ate of the loaves and fishes and were full”; “Labor not for the meat which perisheth but for the meat which endureth unto life eternal”. “But you are taking all the kindness and sympathy out of the gospel”, some one exclaims. No, I am not. God forbid that I should utter a word which should be interpreted to mean that I say unto my brother, “Go, be ye clothed and fed” while I turn about to put on my broadcloth coat and eat my dinner of roast beef, while he walks naked and hungry! But this is true that in all our ministry for the welfare of our brethren, it is the welfare of their lives that we seek and not the welfare of their bodies. You think of him, not as a beast; you think of him as a child of God. You seek constantly his welfare, you love to put clothes upon his back, you love to heal his wounds, you love to make the lame to leap and the blind to see, but you will do this because by so ministering, you serve his whole



life and you redeem his soul. The Christian Church must always assert that her love for men is spiritual as was the love of Jesus.

To what point are we to love our neighbor? Up to the point of sacrifice. That is what Jesus did. "Love one another as I have loved you". Seek always, consistently, the welfare of your brother's life, and seek it until it hurts. That is what Jesus means, *up to the point of sacrifice*. "As I have loved you", said Jesus when the shadow of Gethsemane was falling upon His brow, and when there was graven before Him in feature of flame, the dread figure of the cross. And by this He teaches His Church that they are to love their fellowmen. The Church is to show her love for humanity by loving their lives, and loving their lives to the point of sacrifice—that is the meaning given by the new commandment. Because we have divested it of those associations of sentiment and of affection which cluster around the word in our ordinary usage of it, will you not bear witness with me that we have deepened and strengthened its claim upon the human heart, when we have interpreted it to mean, "Thou shalt consistently seek the welfare of thy brothers's life up to the point of sacrifice"?

It was a solemn moment when Jesus spoke that word. He reserved it until the traitor, Judas, had gone out, because only faithful souls could bear the blaze of the white heat of that new commandment. It is the solemn command which Jesus gives to the Christian Church in every age. "Thou shalt always seek the welfare of thy brother's life, his spiritual life, up to the point of sacrifice". It is a claim that stands in the world today, a claim that has in it a divine compulsion. "Thou shalt love one another". "That ye love one another as I have loved you".

Oh, but you say: "It is limited. It was just Andrew, Peter and James and John and Philip and Thomas and the rest of them, that were to love one another. It did not mean the Roman soldiers in the street. It did not mean the centurions; it did not mean the scribes and Pharisees". Jesus was speaking to His disciples. But with the full light of these twenty centuries blazing in upon those words, with Jesus' own teaching by precept and proverb as He has interpreted the ancient command of Israel, we know that wrapped up in that "you" was potentially the human race. It takes in all mankind. And who dares to draw a circle of limitation around the command of Jesus and say we shall love this one as He loved us but that one is outside of the Church and we need not practice the law towards him. The scope of His command was potentially universal. And in this age the Church must give her allegiance to the universal command or the world will laugh her to scorn. Save as we learn to love humanity as Jesus loved us, spiritually, sacrificially, we deny the word of our Lord. Jesus knew human nature, He knew that He could not command His disciples to have affection for the stranger, for the foreigner, the man of different temperament, but He knew He could command them always to seek consistently his welfare. I cannot command you to love the man who lives across the street from you. His education and training are different from yours. All his interests and sympathies are different from yours. I may not ask you to

love him as you love your brother, but I can ask you to seek always, consistently, the welfare of that man's life, even if it hurts you to do it. And you can do it, and you know that you can do it. He does not dress as you would like him to dress; he is more or less ostentatious in his manner of living, but if you always consistently seek his welfare you will find value in that man's life. You will redeem him. You may not put a limit around the command of Jesus when you interpret Him fairly; for He includes within the scope of it all men. And those people who to you are unpleasant and disagreeable are bound up in it. And if your allegiance to Him is from the heart, you will recognize His claim, you will see their welfare, and you will scorn to do the thing which would injure them.

What is the design? Why did He give it to His disciples? It was a strategic, apologetic and military command. "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another". This is the great apologetic of the Christian Church. This is the great weapon of the Church's warfare. Are we asking wherewith shall the Church go forth? Are we reading in the papers of great congregations of men who cheer the name of Jesus and hiss at the mention of the Christian Church? Are we talking about the unchurched masses who live in our cities and are scattered upon our plains, and who know the name of Jesus to bow in reverence, but who know the Church only to hiss at it? And are we asking wherewith shall we meet these men and win them to the Church? Jesus tells us in John 13: 35—"By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another". If you love, if you seek consistently their welfare in life to the point of sacrifice, they will know that you are His disciples indeed. It will be evidence sufficient when they find you at the point of sacrifice seeking their welfare and they will be found within the Church of Christ. Why are you in the Christian Church? Not because some eloquent man set forth the claims of the Scriptures. These are not those who won you to the Christian Church, but because you knew a life that loved some one, that sought always another's welfare. Some man who stood in the community a commanding figure, the law of whose life was integrity and in whose lips was the law of kindness, who sought always the welfare of his brother, who scorned to take a dividend on watered stock, if he knew that it was coined out of the tears and blood of his brethren; who scorned to speak a word harshly to the man who served him because he knew it would injure his spirit; such a man you knew always and consistently sought the welfare of his brother. It was enough for you. You said of him, "He follows Jesus of Nazareth and is obedient to His commands". Or it was some sainted woman whose life and ministry bore witness to the sacrifices with which her life was poured out for others. She won you into the Christian Church. This is Jesus' plan of campaign. Do you know how to take Providence for Christ? Love. Do I know how to take Hartford for Christ? This is His pledge. This is His way of evangelism. When the Christian Church fully lives out the new commandment, then all men shall know that the Church is the Church of Jesus, and all men shall be found within her walls in worship, and go forth from her portals in service, for He Himself hath promised it.

## \* MYSTICISM IN THE FOURTEENTH, FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CHAPTERS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

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Mysticism is a term which has been used to cover, but not to hide, a multitude of views and vagaries. Quietism, Pietism and Gichtelianism,—strange expressions of religious feeling now well-nigh forgotten—are arrayed under the term; the Beghards, the Beguins, the Euchites, the Hesychasts, the Illuminati and the Omphalopsychites, who gazed in abstraction at their navels, have borne the designation. Good men, too, have been classified as mystics, men like Erigena, Eckhart, John Tauler, Thomas à Kempis and George Fox, the father of the Quakers, disciples of the "Inner Light." Emerson in writing upon representative men, took Swedenborg as the type of the mystic. The transcendentalists, even Carlyle and Emerson, have been called mystics. Many of our poets are mystics.

What is mysticism? A dictionary definition gives it as "Any mode of thought, or phase of intellectual life, in which reliance is placed upon a spiritual illumination believed to transcend the ordinary powers of the understanding". The Encyclopedia Britannica declares, "Mysticism is a phase of thought, or rather perhaps of feeling, which from its very nature is hardly susceptible of exact definition. It appears in connection with the endeavor of the human mind to grasp the divine essence or the ultimate reality of things, and to enjoy the blessedness of actual communication with the Highest".

This writer in the Encyclopedia Britannica, Professor Andrew Seth of University College, Cardiff, Wales, is not wholly consistent with himself, although he consistently describes mysticism. In one column he says, "The type of character to which mysticism is allied is passive, sensuous and feminine, rather than independent, masculine and ethically vigorous". In another column he states, "When a religion begins to ossify into a system of formulas and observances, those who protest in the name of heart-religion are not unfrequently known by the name of mystics", and again, "Mysticism instinctively recedes from formulas that have become stereotyped and mechanical into the perennially fresh experience of the individual". So mysticism may be stigmatized with epithets which are uncomplimentary, and at the same time be extolled as the reforming spirit which is independent, pervasive and virile.

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\* Delivered at the Fifth Conference, held at the Central Baptist Church, February 10, 1904.



William Ralph Inge, of Oxford, England, who delivered the Bampton Lectures for 1899 on Christian Mysticism, uses expressions like the following in descriptive definitions of mysticism: it is "the dim consciousness of the *beyond*, which is part of our nature as human beings"; "a higher instinct, perhaps an anticipation of the evolutionary process"; "an extension of the frontier of consciousness"; "the voice of God speaking to us".

I would define mysticism as the direct cognition of spiritual verities without the intervention of the senses on the one hand, or of logical processes of reasoning on the other.

Can God reveal Himself directly to the human soul? Can man enter into immediate communication with the Divine, unaided by external forms and symbols?

It is not my task to attempt now to answer this inquiry either on the side of psychology or of philosophy, but by simple exegetical methods to show the teaching of the Fourth Gospel in three of the five chapters which Canon Bernard considers contain the central teaching of Jesus Christ. ("The Central Teaching of Jesus Christ", by Canon T. D. Bernard, Macmillan, 1892.)

These chapters, the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth, contain the Johannine account of the final discourse of our Lord to His apostles. The words are spoken in the upper room on the last Thursday evening, after the institution of the Lord's Supper, and the hour probably is tending well toward midnight.

Those apostles still entertained the sensuous conception of the Messiah's kingdom. They thought of the Messiah as destined to rule a temporal kingdom, as Kings David and Solomon had ruled, though now with greater splendor and wider sway. Two of them,—the two who should have understood Him best,—had come with their mother making request for political honors, that one might sit on His right hand and the other on His left in His kingdom; they had disputed and quarreled, even in this last meal, respecting place and preferment, and the Master, to teach them a lesson in humility and service, had girded His loins with a towel and had washed their feet. But yet they did not learn, for, two-score days later, they ask, "Lord, dost Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" thinking still of a political reign,—this on the eve of the ascension.

But now, in that upper room, He gives them sad forebodings: He speaks of treachery and betrayal: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray Me" (13:21); He declares His departure as at hand. "Little children, yet a little while am I with you; ye shall seek Me, and as I said to the Jews, where I go ye cannot come, I say also to you now" (13:33); and He predicts the denial of Peter, His staunchest friend and their brave leader, "Verily, verily, I say to thee, the cock shall not crow until thou hast denied Me three times" (13:38).

These three declarations, of betrayal, of departure, and of denial, dash their expectations of Messianic triumph in a physical kingdom,—dash them for the time being. If He is treacherously betrayed, if He leaves them

alone and they cannot follow, if Peter, foremost of them all, is soon to repudiate Him, what can they hope? what can they expect? Their hearts are heavy,—their hearts are troubled, filled with sorrow and consternation. It is against such a background that the mystic utterances of these chapters are spoken.

"Do not let your heart be troubled", said the Master, "ye are believing upon God, upon Me also believe" (14:1). The Greek verbs for "believe" here are alike; both may be in the indicative mode, both may be in the imperative mode, or one may be indicative and the other imperative; so far as form is concerned there is nothing decisive; but, since Jews believed devoutly in Jehovah,—and they were Jews, pre-eminent in religious opportunities,—we doubtless are correct in taking the former as a statement of fact, and the latter as a corrective of their trouble and dismay: "Ye are believing upon God; believe also upon Me", for ye have as good reason to rest your confidence upon Me as upon God, My Father. Link the invisible with the visible; link the visible with the invisible. In seeing Me you see God; and when I go, you then may have as calm confidence in Me as you have in the invisible God; God, the Father, and I are one.

This is obviously His thought a little further on, when He says, "If ye had known Me, ye would have known My Father also, and from henceforth ye have known Him and have seen Him" (v. 7). And Philip's protest of dull understanding brought out the plainer answer, "Show us the Father and it sufficeth us"; "So long a time have I been with you and hast thou not known Me, Philip? He who hath seen Me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, show us the Father? Dost thou not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me?" (vs. 8-10).

➤ To recognize in the visible the invisible is essentially a mystic act. To see God in nature, in man, in Christ, is essentially mysticism; it is the pushing of consciousness through the sensuous to the supersensuous; it is more than experience, it is discernment; it is more than philosophy, it is vision. The incarnation really requires mysticism.

Though I am betrayed, yet am I unharmed; though I go away, yet do I remain; though you deny Me, yet am I unchanged;—these are the assurances of the Christ.

"I go to prepare a place for you \* \* \* I will come again \* \* \* " (vs. 2, 3). Great errors have been associated with this promise to return. Men have looked for a physical advent, and have set days and hours for the fleshly Jesus to appear. But it is a mystic act; the promise is for fulfilment in a spiritual sense. We have Pauline warrant for asserting that the things of the spirit must be spiritually discerned. He went in the flesh; He returned in the spirit. It was expedient for the flesh (16:7) to disappear, that they might forget the mere flesh and receive the spirit.

"I will ask the Father and He will give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever \* \* \* I will not leave you as orphans, I am coming to you" (vs. 16-18). That the Paraclete is spoken of as another Comforter plainly implies that Jesus, while in the flesh, was the first Com-

forter and that the Paraclete who came was to continue the functions of Jesus, though invisible now, as spirit.

"A little while",—this caused perplexity because they did not understand it in the mystic sense,—“Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth Me no more; but ye behold Me: because I live, ye shall live also. In that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in Me, and I in you” (vs. 19, 20);—a mystic union. “He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him” (v. 21);—a mystic union and mystic acts. Against this Judas (not Iscariot) expostulated as unintelligible, “Lord, what is come to pass, that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us and not unto the world?” (v. 22.) In the reply of Jesus are three mystic acts, love, obedience, union:—“If any man love Me, he will keep My word: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him” (v. 23). Love is the projection of self toward another being; obedience is the surrender of self to another being; and through the outgoing to, and the incoming of, another being a mystic union results.

To the apostles, specific mystic assurances were given. The Master went in order to prepare abodes for them. We have read the text, “In My Father’s house are many mansions” (14: 2). The margin of the American R. V. gives “abiding places” for mansions. I think the clause well rendered by the paraphrase, “where My Father lives, there are many abodes for you.” Usually we have supposed this referred to heaven and glorious habitations therein. But this word for mansions (*monai*) is the same word rendered “abode” in v. 23 of the same chapter: “We will come and make our abode with Him”. It is used only these two times in the New Testament. Its root is the same as the root of the verb used so many times in the 15th chapter, “abide” (*meno*), “except the branch abide in the vine; abide in Me”, etc. Where My Father is, there are abiding places for you. This is not the promise of a far distant future glory but of present fellowship and safety for the immediate future and for all the hereafter. While I go in the flesh, yet I but the better prepare for your spiritual safety in union with the divine.

To the apostles greater works are promised (14: 12) because of this mystic union; to them the inseparable divine presence is assured; God comes and abides; the Comforter will abide; they may abide in Christ, drawing sustenance and strength from Him as a branch depends upon its vine. The verb to abide occurs ten times in the first ten verses of the fifteenth chapter. Though He goes away, yet union with Him is still possible. That is the emphasis of these chapters.

This teaching has a bearing on the doctrine of the trinity set forth and implied in these chapters. The Holy Spirit seems to be the name of God in this mystic relation. God is in Jesus; note such passages as these: “Believe in God, believe also in Me” (14: 1); “he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father” (14: 9); “the Father, who abideth in Me, He doeth the



works" (14: 10); "believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me" (14: 11). The Father and the Son are with the disciples. See passages like these: "In that day (this little while) ye shall know that I am in My Father and ye are in Me and I in you" (14: 20); "if any one love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him (14: 23). The Holy Spirit is with the disciples; Jesus said, "I will send Him" (15: 26), and the Father would send Him (14: 26); He will lead into all truth (16: 13); He will convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment (16: 8-11). The Father, the Son and the Spirit abide in union with the disciples.

Let us recapitulate the thought of the Master which undergird these chapters:

1. The betrayal is at hand. The divine can be delayed, but not thwarted, because the divine does not depend upon the flesh.
2. Peter may deny, yet this is but an episode, not the conclusion.
3. The Master will leave them,—yes, in the flesh; but even more fully does He remain with them in the spirit. It was expedient for Him to go, in order that they might the more clearly see Him, not as king, nor priest, nor prophet, not as the Messiah long expected, but as God, immortal, eternal, more than earth can contain, more than flesh can reveal or the senses perceive. There was no separation; after the garden, and after the trial, after Calvary there was the opportunity for the closer, the real union with Him.

Such appears to be the main import of these three chapters. Union in a spiritual sense is the key word.

We may well inquire now, whether this is the mysticism of Jesus or of John. Has the subjective element of this Fourth Gospel so thrust itself forward in these chapters as to color completely the phrasing and the conception and consequently distort the teaching of Jesus? Is this the mind of Jesus which we here find? or is it the thought of the author? Has the writer stepped into the Teacher's place? Does he lay words on the Master's lips?

Three simple answers may be given:

1. The description of Thomas and Philip in these chapters accords with all other descriptions given of them; and it is but fair to assume that if fidelity and consistency exist in the lesser details they exist also in the main features of the narrative.

The Thomas who here says, "how can we know the way?" is as slow of discernment as the Thomas, who, in the synoptic narrative, must needs put his finger in the nail-prints and thrust his hand into the wounded side.

The Philip who here exclaims, "show us the Father and it sufficeth us", is the man of practical affairs, who sees material things, the man unto whom certain Greeks, seeking Jesus, found readiest access, and the man who, off-hand, could quickly compute the amount of bread and the cost for feeding five thousand people.

2. Such mysticism as we find here is present also in substance in the Synoptic Gospels. The Sermon on the Mount, though largely practical, yet

is permeated with mystical elements. The beatitudes have such elements as this: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God". The great judgment, recorded by Matthew, recognizes a mystical service, which, while not at the time apprehended, is nevertheless real: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, My brethren, ye have done it unto Me".

"Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world", is the promise of the Great Commission,—the assurance of a mystic union, repeated in the words, "where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in their midst".

In the synoptic narrative Jesus repeatedly exhorts him that hath an ear to hear, to hear,—that is, to hear more than is said in mere phrase, to understand the principle and to enter into the spiritual sense.

3. In all the Gospels, the immediate presence of God is the special message of Jesus. He is our Father; He cares for us; He knows even the hairs of our heads; not a sparrow falls to the ground without His notice, and His solicitude for us is even greater and more constant.

➤ Really, the religion of Jesus Christ, like every religion which is more than mere casuistry or ethics, has mystical aspects and elements. It points to the unseen as real; insists upon a spiritual presence, unknown through the senses, unperceived by reason alone.

A mysticism, such as we find in these three chapters, is the Christian mysticism especially suited to the needs of our day. A few considerations will make this apparent:

This is pre-eminently a commercial age, when materialism, not as a philosophy—that is past—but as a method of life, is dominant. To offset it, stress must be laid upon the unseen as the most real and the most valuable.

Transitions in progress today in church and theology tend toward and demand a rational mysticism. The doctrine of inspiration in its dynamic form now becoming prevalent, thinks not of impartation from external sources so much of an internal illumination which opens inward vision. According to the modern view, now widely prevailing, the Bible is regarded as a record of what man has discovered respecting God,—a record of how God has touched man and of man's comprehension of that contact,—mystic relations more or less perfect of which man has been in varying degrees conscious. The distinction between things sacred and things secular tends to vanish because of a mysticism extending amongst men. To the Jew, who saw little more than things of sense, one place (the temple), one day (the Sabbath) and one portion of possessions (a tithe) were holy. Now we are recognizing all places, all times and all possessions as essentially holy, because of the invisible, mystically recognized. Men are beginning to learn that God is everlasting and that fellowship with Him and service unto Him should be continuous. Indeed we are beginning fairly to accept the doctrine of the immanence of God: "He is not far from every one of us; in Him we live, move and have our being"; He occupies all space, is ever-present, and is excluded not even from His finite creatures.

Perhaps some of these tendencies might lead one legitimately to philosophical monism ; but this is certain : a recognition of the validity of mysticism, if we keep ourselves back from reliance upon mere feeling and the weird imaginings of disordered brains, may prompt us to push the frontier of consciousness further out into the infinite, to keep the heart holy in order that we may discover therein the image of its divine maker, to see in the visible the invisible, and in the vision find grounds for confidence and hope, even when misfortune and disaster impend or overwhelm us. If we are in fellowship with the divine, we may breathe the pure atmosphere of heaven, even while still on the earth.

“As, in life's best hours, we hear  
By the spirit's finer ear  
His low voice within us, thus  
The All-Father heareth us;  
And His holy ear we pain  
With our noisy words and vain.  
Not for Him our violence  
Storming at the gates of sense,  
His the primal language, His  
The eternal silences”.

— Whittier, “The Prayer of Agassiz”.



## \* JESUS THE REVELATION OF THE FATHER.

(ST. JOHN 14:6-11.)

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Stress upon revelation, or the disclosure of truth, is especially characteristic of the Fourth Gospel and the Epistles, which, together, form the proper Johannine group of writings. Revelation is rated therein not merely as a means of intellectual illumination, but still more as a means of moral and spiritual transformation. The office of Jesus as a revealer is emphasized, and a large part of His redemptive agency is located in His impartation of truth. He is described as the true light which lighteth every man, the light of the world, in following whom men shall escape from darkness and have the light of life (1:9; 8:12). He is the manifested truth and the manifested life (14:6; 1 John 1:2). The true knowledge, in which lies eternal life, is mediated through Him (17:3, 4; 1:18; 14:9). His economy is an economy of truth as well as of grace (1:17). To this end came He into the world, that He might bear witness to the truth (18:37). He is a bearer of life as a messenger of truth; His words are words of eternal life (6:68). While His flesh is described as the bread given for the life of the world, the explanation is added: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words I have spoken unto you they are spirit and are life" (6:63). The message of truth is thus identified with the meat which the Son of Man giveth and which abideth unto eternal life (6:27). A like efficacy is assigned to His message in the declaration to the disciples: "Already ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (15:3). He cleanses by the virtue of His word. And this office of a saving disclosure of truth is not confined within the limits of His earthly life. The Spirit sent in His name has the work of vitalizing in men's souls the revelation given in and through Him. The specific function of the Comforter is to take of the things of Christ and show them unto men (16:7-15). Thus a mighty stress falls upon the element of revelation. Doubtless it was not in the mind of John to ignore the element of atonement, the worth of the supreme sacrifice of Christ as a fundamental and conditioning factor in the economy of grace. In referring to Jesus as the Lamb of God, and in speaking of Him as dying for the people, he gives expression in his Gospel to that element. Even more explicitly he refers to it in the Epistle in

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\* Delivered at the Seventh Conference, held at the Central Congregational Church, April 13, 1904.

naming Jesus Christ the propitiation for the sins of the world. Still, the more frequent reference is to the transcendent agency of Christ in making known the truth. With full warrant, we may say that, according to the Johannine representation, Christ came into the world as a truth-radiating personality, and fulfilled in large part His saving office as a bearer and impersonation of the truth.

With logical propriety, John makes the summit of the revealing work of Jesus to consist in the disclosure of the infinite Father. As the only-begotten Son, dwelling in the paternal bosom, and dwelling also in the visible flesh, He declares the unseen Father and makes Him known by a superlative and authentic message (1:14, 18). By the work accomplished in His earthly vocation He glorifies the Father (17:4). He is the way to the Father, the sole means of true access to inner and saving fellowship with Him (14:6, 13, 23). So fully does He reveal the Father that He is qualified to say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (15:9; 12:45).

The character and activities through which Jesus furnishes the full revelation of the Father, though not discussed in the Johannine writings after the manner of a dogmatic treatise, are intimated quite positively and fully. First of all under this category is to be placed the holy humanity of Jesus. While John, it is true, does not assert in so many words that Jesus possessed complete manhood, he affords ground for inferring that he recognized this truth. He assigns to the Master the full complement of sensibilities, affections and experiences which belong to the proper human subject. He declares explicitly that He came in the flesh, and denounces the opposite opinion as the warped and wicked contention of antichrist. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (1:14). "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God" (1 John 4:2, 3). "Many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist" (2 John 7). Affirmations of this order, it is to be granted, are not distinct assertions of the complete manhood of Jesus, but they point in that direction. For, in the dialect of the writer, "flesh" is capable of a larger reference than to the mere body. In at least one instance it is used where the term *men* might have been employed (17:2). There is a suggestion, therefore, that in John's thought the incarnation, or the coming in the flesh, may have been understood to imply the assumption of manhood in its entirety. And this suggestion is confirmed by the application to Jesus of the designation "Son of Man" (5:27; 6:27, 62). Whatever may be the primary or foremost association of this term, it would not naturally have been applied to a personality that was not conceived to be genuinely implicated in the race or truly participant of human nature.

That the humanity in Jesus was perfectly pure and guiltless was evidently the staunch conviction of John. He represents Him as claiming to be entirely void of unrighteousness and as doing always the things pleasing

to the Father (7: 18; 8: 29). Moreover, he pens the unqualified declaration: "Ye know that He was manifested to take away sins; and in Him is no sin" (1 John, 3: 5). With John, as with the other New Testament writers, the complete sinlessness of Jesus was the axiom prefixed to the whole doctrine of salvation.

Now an exceptional humanity like this is fitted to be in an exceptional sense a mirror of the divine. It reflects the higher realities as the calm, clear water takes the image of the sky. In the unsullied soul of Jesus, there was opportunity for divine thought, will, purpose and disposition to be pictured in authentic colors. And the demand for this pure medium is not to be regarded as nullified by any transcendent factor in the incarnate Lord. As the divine thought came to expression from the lips of a prophet only through the medium of his psychical nature and activity, so in Christ, any content from the timeless sphere of divine thought and life may be supposed to have gained the forms of human conception and speech only by being mediated through His human soul. The purity of this finite medium must therefore be counted, as well on the catholic as on the humanitarian conception of His person, a prime condition of an authentic revelation of the divine. The holiness of the man Jesus must be reckoned a condition of the perfect manifestation of the Father in and through Him. John may not have directly enforced this point of view; but he provides for it in so far as he postulates the humanity of Jesus, since he profoundly emphasizes the intrinsic connection between spiritual enlightenment and holy character. No writer has ever surpassed him in the intense expression of the conviction that the seeing faculty is with love and righteousness, while darkness is the inevitable legacy of hatred and sin.

Whatever consideration may have been given to the holy humanity of Jesus as a medium of divine revelation by the author of the Fourth Gospel and the related Epistles, that consideration by no means exhausted his contemplation of the qualifications of Jesus to make known the Father. He regarded his Lord as vastly transcending in nature and essential relations the common human scale, and estimated his competency to reveal the Father in the light of this transcendence. In a variety of ways he affords unmistakeable intimation that this was his point of view.

In the first place this Johannine standpoint is strongly asserted in the description of Christ as the Logos, or Word. As in Greek usage this term connotes both thought and its manifestation, so in the description which goes with it in the prologue to the Fourth Gospel we have this double reference. On the one hand the Word, much after the pattern of Philo's conception, is the archetypal idea, in which the world is potentially existent, the rational antecedent of all things, divine in relation and in nature. He was in the beginning, that is, as far back as thought can go in its effort to interpret the world. He was with God, that is, in living union with Him. He was God, that is, the adequate image and counterpart of the eternal Father. On the other hand, the Word is the medium of manifestation. He bridges over the interval between the invisible Father and the visible system



of things. "Without Him was not anything made that hath been made". Within the world thus dependent on His agency, He has been, and is continually a source of illumination. He is "the true light, even the light which lighteth every man coming into the world".

That in this lofty characterization of the Word, John was giving expression more or less directly to his conviction of the competency of the historical Jesus to reveal the Father cannot fairly be questioned. In his view, the Word became flesh. The Word was in the historical Jesus. And He was there as a transcendent factor in the historical personality, not as something eclipsed, quiescent, robbed of characteristic powers, and lost to self. Who can read the discourses which John attributes to the Master, even in the early part of his Gospel, and not discover there, in the order of self-consciousness ascribed to Jesus, a reflex of the transcendent rank and position of the Word who was with God in the beginning? His designation of Himself in the third chapter as the only begotten Son; His description of Himself in the fourth chapter as able to give the living water springing up into everlasting life; His expression of a sense of unlimited copartnership with the Father in the fifth chapter—all this, with much besides, is clearly indicative that Jesus, at least in the era of His public ministry, was credited in Johannine thought with a knowledge and sense of prerogative, correspondent with the exalted rank and relation of the Word. In the character of the Word He was accounted to have been with the Father in the beginning, to have come forth from Him, and, therefore, to have been pre-eminently qualified to reveal Him.

The terms used in the prologue of the Gospel are most reasonably taken as amounting to an ascription of personality to the Word. The conclusion therefore follows that, in so far as the indwelling Word was viewed as constitutive of Christ, personal pre-existence was predicated of Him. It is to be noticed, too, that evidence of faith in Christ's personal pre-existence is not confined to the prologue. John the Baptist is represented as saying of the Christ, "He was before me". Of Himself, Christ is said to have declared: "No man hath ascended into heaven but He that descended out of heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven". "He that cometh from above is above all \* \* \* what He hath seen and heard, of that He beareth witness". "The bread of God is He that cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world". "Not that any man hath seen the Father save He which is from God. He hath seen the Father". "What then if ye shall see the Son of Man ascending where He was before". "Before Abraham was, I am". "Glorify Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee, before the world was" (1: 30; 3: 13, 31, 32; 6: 33, 45, 62; 8: 58; 17: 5). Now the collective force of these texts is decisive, and one and another of them taken separately may well work despair in the critic who is minded to impute a merely ideal pre-existence to the Johannine Christ. For instance, how on the supposition of nothing but ideal pre-existence can Christ be said to have dealt fairly with the Jews in making such an affirmation as is recorded in 8: 58? His Jewish questioners

understood a preceding statement to imply logically that He was contemporary with Abraham. Instead of correcting their inference, He approved it, or rather transcended it by explicitly affirming an antiquity superior to that of Abraham. Who can imagine that the evangelist designed to represent Him in this saying as merely throwing dust in the eyes of His opponents by using terms in a sense foreign to the occasion? Again, it is quite over-taxing to expel the thought of real pre-existence from the language of 17: 5. It has been alleged, indeed, that, inasmuch as Christ asks for glorification as a reward for the faithful fulfilment of His mission, it could not have been His by right of original position. But this reasoning rests upon an arbitrary premise. Nothing in the context enforces the conclusion that Christ asks for glorification simply and solely as a reward for fidelity. In His perfect filial submission, He recognized that the times and the seasons were in the Father's hand. It seemed to Him that His work was approaching a consummation, so that soon the state of humiliation might properly give place to the state of exaltation. Very naturally, therefore, He gave expression to the aspiration by which His spirit was upborne. So far from standing in the way of His confident request, the perfection of His title to heavenly glory gave all the freer scope to His communion with the Father respecting His investment with that glory. Once more it has been urged, that the glory to which Christ looked may be compared to the treasure reserved in heaven for believers, or to the kingdom prepared for the faithful from the foundation of the world; and that consequently it is only a conceptual pre-existence with which we are here confronted. But this way of arguing overlooks the broad difference between the things brought into comparison. It is one thing to conceive of a treasure, a sphere of glory, a heavenly kingdom, as *standing ready* for foreordained subjects. It is another thing to say of a given subject that He *possessed* or *enjoyed* that glory or that kingdom before the world was. A statement of the latter order is never made in the New Testament respecting God's redeemed children. Christ's reference to a glory, which He had with the Father before the world was, stands apart from and in antithesis to any scriptural language ever applied to the simple human heir to a prepared estate. (Compare the author's *System of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 613-615).

The conviction was evidently sun-clear in the mind of the evangelist that the personal existence of Christ preceded His earthly life. No less certain is it that He thought of this exalted and prior existence as a source of authentic knowledge about things heavenly and divine. This point has already been brought out in the interpretation of the Johannine thought of the incarnation of the Word. A further enforcement might be drawn from the third chapter of the Gospel. For, here Christ is placed in contrast with every other messenger among men. He is the one who alone has descended out of heaven, so that when He speaks of heavenly things He speaks of that which He has seen and heard. Because He had ever had His home in the bosom of the Father He was qualified to declare Him.

A second transcendent qualification of Christ to reveal the Father, and

one closely related to the foregoing, appears in the Johannine thought of His unique sonship and co-partnership with the Father. The conviction that in Christ an extraordinary sonship came to manifestation may be observed in John's choice of terms. He reserves the designation "Son of God" (*Uios tou Theou*) for Christ, styling all other participants in the filial relation simply children of God (*tekna Theou*). That this usage should prevail without a single exception may reasonably be regarded as indicative that sonship in some special and extraordinary sense pertained to Christ. The same belief is likewise attested by the employment of the phrase "only begotten". Whatever interpretation may have been claimed for this phrase by one and another exegete, Meyer expresses its natural implication when he says: "*Only begotten* designates the Logos as the *only* Son, besides whom the Father has none, who did not, like the *tekna Theou* (1: 12, 13), become such by moral generation, nor by adoption, but by intrinsic relation inhering in the divine essence, whereby He was *in the beginning* with God, being Himself divine in nature and person". (Comment on John 1: 14.) In this point of view, the natal day of the Son was antecedent to the world. He was the Son as the ever-uttered Word. To borrow a phrase from the Epistle to the Hebrews, He was the Son as "the effulgence of the Father's glory and the express image of His substance".

In harmony with this assumption of a transcendent sonship, we meet in the Johannine teaching with a mighty emphasis upon the complete co-partnership of the Son with the Father. Few things in the whole content of the Fourth Gospel come to more frequent and energetic expression than this fact of full co-partnership. John the Baptist is represented as saying: "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand" (3: 35). From the lips of Christ such sentences are placed on record as the following: "The Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth" (5: 20). "The Father hath given all judgment unto the Son, that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father" (5: 22, 23). "As the Father raiseth the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will" (5: 21). "As the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself" (5: 26). "I am the bread of life". "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he that eateth Me, he also shall live because of Me" (6: 48, 57). "He that sent Me is with Me; He hath not left Me alone" (8: 29). "I speak the things which I have seen with My Father" (8: 38). "I know Mine own, and Mine own know Me, even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father" (10: 14, 15). "I and My Father are one" (10: 30). "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do them, though ye believe not Me, believe the works; that ye may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father" (10: 37, 38). "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me and I in you" (14: 10, 20). "All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine" (16: 15).

It may be admitted that in some of the Johannine sentences which accentuate the union of the Son with the Father the thought of moral union



is prominent. Indeed, it would be a distinct loss to withhold recognition from this thought or to allow it to be displaced by any competing notion. The oneness of Christ with the Father in the sense of perfect conformity to the Father's ethical nature and will is of the highest practical moment. It is revelation of the divine on this side that we want above all to receive in trustworthy and adequate form. But still it is quite without warrant to suppose that John made a gap between the moral and the metaphysical, and gave his contemplation exclusively to the former when he spoke of the oneness of the Son with the Father. On the contrary, it is every way probable that he thought of the exceptional nature and divine relation which he affirmed of the Son as being auxiliary to the unique moral unity. We may say, indeed, that it is certain that he supposed the transcendent knowledge, which pertained to the Son from His residence with the Father before the foundation of the world, to have qualified Him in an extraordinary degree to embrace the moral purposes of God in all their reach and compass. The intrinsic connections of Johannine thought assure us that, though the primary stress may have been on moral unity, there was a certain reference in the expressions under consideration to the truth asserted at the opening of the Gospel: "The Word was with God and the Word was God".

It scarcely needs to be stated that no higher qualification for divine revelation can be conceived than this unique sonship and co-partnership with the Father. Who should know the Father so well as the only-begotten Son? The servant may not know what his lord doeth, but the son dwelling in bosom companionship with the head of the house may be supposed to share his counsels fully. Who should be able to represent the Father so well as the one having such community with Him that He could say of Himself: "I and My Father are one"? Then, too, it must be remembered that perfect sonship is in itself, by virtue of its essential characteristics, a medium for revealing God in so far as the fatherly character is truly descriptive of Him. Sonship and fatherhood are normally correlated. The one reveals the other. When we see the child who has had full opportunity to know the parent, yielding to that parent hearty reverence, clinging love, and unqualified confidence, then spontaneously we image to ourselves the parent as characterized by tender dignity, exemplary largeness of heart, and great fervency and constancy of affection. Under the supposed conditions the filial mirrors the paternal. So we look upon the sonship of Jesus, and as we feel the charm of its beauty and perfection we pass up spontaneously to the fatherhood to which it responds, and feel in like manner the charm of its beauty and perfection. The realized ideal of sonship touches us with a vital impression of the ideal fatherhood. In this way, from the beginning to the end of His career, Jesus shows us the Father. It is impossible for us to walk with Him and take note of His filial spirit without being introduced to the paternal counterpart.

Once more Johannine teaching awards to Jesus a special prerogative to reveal the Father in consideration of His extraordinary vocation and works. His coming is set forth as the sun-burst of eternal love upon this world of sin and misery. Back of advent, doing, suffering, propitiation, everything,

was the free, unbought love of the Father. "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (3 : 16). "Herein was the love of God manifested in us, that God hath sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4 : 9, 10). Thus the sacrifice of the Son was inaugurated in the sacrifice of the Father. Indeed, Bushnell kept fully within the warrant of Johannine teaching when He spoke of the cross as being in God's heart from eternity. According to most emphatic declarations of the evangelist, the love of the Father was but given visible expression in all that the Son did and suffered for men.

Not merely in its general tenor and import does the life-story of Jesus serve to reveal the Father, but also various single features of that story may be regarded as mirroring the feeling and attitude of the heavenly Father toward men. When we note the tenderness with which Jesus ministered to the suffering and distressed, we have an object lesson on the compassion of the heavenly Father, and are encouraged to believe, in spite of the hard appearance of nature and history, that His tender mercies are over all the works of His hands. When we observe the patience which Jesus exercised toward disciples who were short-sighted and slow of heart, we have disclosed to us the forbearance of the heavenly Father toward His blundering and imperfect children. When we read the parable of the good shepherd, and consider the wealth of affectionate solicitude and care for the sheep which it portrays, we know that all the Psalmist said about the Lord as a shepherd is gloriously true for every soul that has a purpose to follow His leading. When we come upon the record that Jesus having loved His own which were in the world loved them unto the end, or hear His own declaration that no one shall ever snatch His sheep out of His hand, we have pictured to us the tenacity of that love with which the heavenly Father cleaves to those who have ever entered into filial relations with Himself. In short, in all the typical scenes and events of the ministry of Jesus, we may note the application of His own comprehensive words: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

The aspiring mystic is inclined to think of the direct flight of the soul to God as his high privilege, and to rate any intermediate agency as a superfluity. At times he is even tempted to give slight recognition to his dependence upon the Christ. But in the continual use of this method he is likely to discover that his impression of the divine is becoming vague, and his sense of fellowship with the divine is waning in vitality. It answers to a deep need of the human heart to have the divine set forth through a concrete historic medium. So the author of the Fourth Gospel felt, and he considered that the need had been perfectly met in his Lord and Master. The revelation of God in Jesus Christ flooded his soul as with the radiance of a sweet and holy morning. May the responsive heart be in us, that the same revelation may bring to us also a full measure of illumination and rejoicing.

**\* THE PRESENCE OF THE FATHER, SON AND SPIRIT THROUGH  
OBEDIENCE TO THE COMMANDS OF CHRIST.**

(ST. JOHN 14 : 21-26.)

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Luther used to call the Gospel of John "the child's Gospel", because of its simplicity. It is as simple as are all the great things of earth and heaven, and it is also as profound. It is as lucid and translucent as the ocean, and as fathomless. It is as bottomless as the Utgard horn, which Thor once tried to drain, for its sources are hidden in the depths of divine love. We shall never exhaust the meaning of this Gospel of heaven. It is a text-book for time and for eternity.

In the three verses which we are to consider together, though they are not cast in the form of the syllogism, there is a logical progression of thought. The third verse is an epitome of the whole: "If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him". Three key words serve to unlock its meaning: obedience, love, manifestation. First, obedience to Christ's commands proves man's love for Him; second, such obedience and love is rewarded by the love of the Father and the Son; third, this mutual love of God and man furnishes the conditions of the revelation of the Father and the Son in the loyal soul through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit.

1. First, then, obedience to Christ's commands proves man's love for Him.

Obedience is at once the outgrowth and the test of love to Christ. "If a man love Me he will keep My words". Love to Christ must always, if it be worthy of the name, issue in obedience. It divines the wishes of the Master and springs to fulfil them. It needs no compulsion nor any code of rules: it serves the spirit, not the letter.

Love for Christ, you see, is a very practical thing indeed. It is not a mere emotion in which "to sit and sing ourselves away to realms of everlasting bliss". It is not the luxurious and enervating atmosphere of which the sentimentalist and the poet prate, though it might well form the theme of the poet's song. It "bids, not sit nor stand, but go!" It is obedience to the demands of a strenuous life of sacrifice. It places Christ above every worldly good, above father or mother, brother or sister. The life it

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\* Delivered at the Sixth Conference, held at the Trinity Union Methodist Episcopal Church, March 9, 1904.



demands is no easy, rose-strown path, warmed by a mawkish sentimentality. It may lead a man to darkest Africa or China. It may mean the dengue fever, or a hostile Boxer mob and a cruel death in a lonely land. Love is not a notion of the brain, but a set of the will. It lives in deeds, not words; life service, not lip service. It says, "I'll go where you want me to go, I'll do what you want me to do, I'll be what you want me to be". It is the foundation of all morality, the inspiration of all self-sacrifice.

And obedience is not only the logical consequence and fruit of love, it is also love's supreme test. "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is (and no other) that loveth Me". We cannot conceive a fairer test than this. There are many false and sentimental forms of affection in the world, masquerading under that name, from which these words of Jesus strip the disguise. There is a moral and intellectual admiration of Jesus which is not love because it will not obey; it resides in the head, and never lays hold of the springs of action; it doffs the cap and bows the head, but does not do the will. Love is obedience. All other so-called love is spurious. To love is to obey; to obey is to love.

"Obedience! 'Tis the great tap root, which still  
Knit round the rock of duty, is not stirred  
Though storm and tempest work their utmost will!"

2. Such obedient love is rewarded by the love of the Father and the Son. This form of devotion, a love which serves, attracts as the earth the lightning, the love of God. Obedience is love's law of gravitation. In a sense, God loves all men: "God so loved the world", we read—the world alienated by wicked works, disloyal. In this one-half God's heart, its giving impulse, is satisfied. This is the love of benevolence, which loves while it cannot approve. But God's is a moral affection, and He loves in a special sense those whose regard for Him is proved by obedience to the commands of His Son. "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" Love which is not mutual is incomplete. "He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father". God's love for the Son includes all who are loyal to Him. This is the love of complacency, which also approves its object. It differs from that of benevolence, which God cherishes toward all men, as one's pity for a guilty and unresponsive neighbor differs from the love of a father for a worthy son who returns his affection. In it the whole heart of God finds satisfaction, the craving as well as the giving impulse.

He who obeys Christ, then, loves Him; he who loves Christ shall be loved of God. The third step in this progression is a very blessed one—"And I", says Jesus, "will love him". A new and more tender affection springs up in the heart of Jesus as He sees the eye of the Father resting upon His disciple. The loyal soul is now enfolded in love as in an atmosphere; he is bathed in it as in a sea. Three arcs make up the perfect circle: man's arc of love is the shorter, yet it reaches a part of the way;

Christ's love and God's love are the larger arcs which overlap each other and the love of man, and wrap him round and round in a perfect sphere.

3. The two thoughts which we have traversed thus far are: 1. Obedience—of man to Christ. 2. Love—of the Father and the Son for the obedient soul. By these two steps on the ladder of love we have reached the third stage in the thought of the text—"Manifestation". "He that obeys Me loves Me, and he that lovingly obeys Me shall be loved by My Father and Myself, and I will manifest Myself to him".

Let us consider, first, the condition on which this manifestation of the Son is promised, and, second, the form which it takes.

The *condition* of the revelation is love in the recipient soul. Jesus will not reveal Himself to all men. "Judas (not Iscariot) saith unto Him, Lord, what is come to pass that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" Judas was not of that group of the disciples who understood most keenly the mind of their Master. Only lately Jesus had shown Himself openly to the people in His triumphal entrance into the holy city. Judas thought that something must have happened that Jesus should now confine His manifestation to a chosen few. Jesus does not answer Judas directly, but proceeds as though He had not heard the question. Yet He does in effect answer him by reaffirming the promise and emphasizing again the condition on which the revelation of Himself may be received. "Jesus answered and said unto him. If a man love Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him". Jesus will reveal Himself only to those who love and obey Him. He *can* reveal Himself only to such, for without love in the heart no man can receive the revelation of God.

The intellect alone can never know God. The brain is agnostic. The question of Job, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" has never been answered with satisfaction to the intellect. The astronomer sweeps the heaven with his telescope and declares that he cannot find God there. The geologist with his hammer breaks up the rocks and delves into the earth, but does not discover the Creator. The anatomist with his scalpel divides the tissues of the body, and traces nerve, and vein and artery to its source, but the God in man eludes him. The psychologist ponders the processes of mind and formulates the rules of its action, but fails to find the guiding hand.

But the intellect was never meant to be the only organ of discovery. Man was made to soar toward truth on the two pinions of intellect and heart. When he beats the air with either wing alone he flutters, but he cannot fly. A certain fondness for a matter will do much to aid us to pierce to the central secret of it. Without the lubricant of love the edge of mind grows dull. A little warm sunshine will sometimes bore farther than an augur, no matter how much brute force there may be behind it. All of which are but different ways of saying that the heart will often guide us to truth which the head would never discover. The artist detects beauties in nature, delicacies of color and form to which we are blind, because he is

endowed with the insight of love. The musician hears harmonies to which we are deaf, because the whole man vibrates in unison with them.

“Earth’s crammed with heaven,  
And every common bush afire with God,  
But only he who sees takes off his shoes”.

“Ever the words of the gods resound;  
But the porches of man’s ear  
Seldom in this low life’s round,  
Are unsealed that he may hear”.

It is love that enlightens the eyes and unseals the ears. Love is the eye of the soul. They tell us, love is blind! No! there is nothing else in the universe so clear sighted!

We cannot know man until we have learned to love him. We do not know our acquaintances; only our friends, and these in proportion to our affection for them. In the better world, if men should be stripped of the bodies by which we have hitherto recognized them, we shall know only those with whose souls we have become intimate here. And we cannot know souls except as we love them. Without love is no sympathy, therefore no knowledge.

It is the loving heart alone, then, that can receive the manifestations of God in Christ. There must have been, I think, in the mind of John, some reminiscence of the thought of our text when he declared in his Epistle, “Everyone that loveth, knoweth God”. We must come toward Him from this angle before we can understand Him. If the brain is agnostic, the heart is theistic. Christ cannot reveal Himself to a loveless world simply because it lacks the organ of apprehension. Affection is the only soil in which knowledge of God grows to its rarest heights. Paul, the philosopher, introduces us to God, tells us many things about Him; John, the beloved disciple, puts into our hand the key which unlocks the chamber in which He dwells and ushers us into His presence, and the name of that key is love.

If we would, then, have this manifestation of Jesus in our lives, we must love Him and obey Him. Every act of loving obedience will make the vision clearer. This is the indispensable condition of knowledge of God, a love which reverently keeps His word.

We pass to *the form* which this promised manifestation will take: “We will come unto Him and make Our abode with Him”.

Two points attract our attention. First, the manifestation of Christ is made from within the soul, not from without. This inwardness of the revelation is what troubled Judas. “What has come to pass”, he asks, “that Thou, as Messiah, wilt not show Thyself openly as we have expected, so that the Gentiles may come to Thy light, and kings to the brightness of Thy rising?” It is, however, a spiritual presence of which Jesus is speaking. It is no sudden or magical revelation, but one that comes by the slow process of living and loving. It is not accompanied by the signs of earthly



power or by the trappings of earthly state. Men cannot say of it, "Lo, here!" or "Lo, there!" It is a revelation within the soul.

Second, the manifestation is permanent, not transient: "We will come unto Him and make Our abode with Him". Jesus has been telling His disciples that He must soon leave them, but He now answers them that His absence is not to be for long. In exchange for the physical presence of the Master, with its limitations of place and time, they are to have the spiritual presence, which is free from these limitations. The loving heart is to become the dwelling-place of the Father and Son.

We associate, and rightly, this passage with the promise, which came earlier in the chapter, of the gift of the Holy Spirit. In the verse immediately preceding the text, Jesus has said, "In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father and ye in Me and I in you". The expression "in that day" is held by most to indicate a precise moment rather than a period, and is referred to Pentecost. We are to recognize, then, in the coming of the Holy Spirit, the advent of the Father and Son to make their abode in the human heart. The thought most grateful to us is, that in the presence of the Spirit we may recognize the presence of Jesus. "The Lord is the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:17). This Jesus whom we have learned to love comes in the Spirit to dwell with us.

This blessed promise of the Saviour irradiates life with a new hope. Jesus is not merely a good man who has passed away, leaving only an influence behind Him. Our God is not the unknowable God of the agnostic, of whom we can learn no more than of the further side of the moon. God and Christ dwell in the obedient soul.

"Nearer is He than breathing,  
Closer than hands or feet".

Having seen the vision, man is not to be left to fight the battle with sin alone. There is to be an abiding presence within the soul to inspire, and guard, and guide.

In ancient Greece, so runs the legend, a prize was offered for the best statue of a certain god. Faith in the gods was almost gone, but in a country village, near a marble quarry, lived a youth who still believed in them and loved them. He aspired to win the prize for himself. Choosing a rough block of marble, he set to work with all his skill. But, though he had in his soul the highest ideal of the majesty and beauty of the god whom he would portray, his clumsy fingers made little progress. At last the statues were gathered to be judged, and among them the rude, uncouth attempt of the boy. The critics ridiculed the inartistic figure, and the boy hung his head in shame. But the god in whom the youth believed had pity on him, and entered into the pathetic failure. Then the head was proudly raised, the harsh lines fell away into perfect symmetry and grace, and the statue took on the vigor and harmony of life. So Christ enters the soul that loves Him and redeems its failures, working out within it, in wondrous

beauty, the ideal of which it despairs. So the obedient soul triumphs through the indwelling Christ.

The promise of Jesus fills life also with a new purpose. How well worth striving for is the fulfilment of the promise of the Saviour's presence. How vain and empty in comparison the prospect which the world holds out to its votaries, of wealth, or fame, or ease. To gain Christ and be found in Him, to have His abiding presence in our hearts, is the noblest aspiration of the soul that loves Him.

It makes forever impossible also any lower aim. If Christ will dwell in us, the house must be swept and garnished, and other guests, whom He cannot know, must be expelled. How can selfishness, or greed, or any baseness find a home with us? We can never be satisfied now with anything less than the highest.

A Roman sculptor once began a statue of the Christ. After weary months of toil he brought a friend into his studio and unveiled the statue with the question, "Who is this?" The friend replied, "That is surely the figure of some very great and good man". Profoundly disappointed, the artist set to work again, and after other months of labor, bringing into the room a little child, he again asked the question. The child clasped her hands and said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me". Then the sculptor knew that he had succeeded. A little later came an order from the emperor that he should make a statue of Venus for the palace. But the sculptor proudly refused, sending back the message, "I have conceived a statue of the Christ! I can no longer carve statues to Venus!" So the vision once seen, the presence once felt, we can no longer live upon the lower plane of the past. We are driven forward to ever new heights of achievement and experience.

It raises man, finally, to a new dignity. To be capable of such fellowship with God as Jesus here suggests, predicates something of man that is very wonderful indeed. What less does it mean than the essential unity of the nature of God and Christ and man? It draws man out of time and sets him in eternity. It finds him on the earth and leaves him in heaven. It is the last and greatest word that can be said of man, and sets him off from the rest of created things in exalted isolation. It arouses every ambition of the soul, sanctifies it and satisfies it. This is our heritage from God, heirs, not only of what God has to give, but heirs of God Himself. "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?" The grateful soul exclaims, "Thou hast made him but little lower than God, and hast crowned him with glory and honor!" "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!"

"The very God! think Abib; dost thou think?  
So, the All-Great were the All-Loving too—  
So, through the thunder comes a human voice  
Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here!  
Face, My hands fashioned, see it in Myself!  
Thou hast no power, nor mayst conceive of Mine,  
But love I gave thee, with Myself to love,  
And thou must love Me who have died for thee!"

## \* FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS THROUGH OBEDIENCE TO HIS COMMANDS.

(ST. JOHN 15:14, 15.)

BY REV. JOHN D. PICKLES, PH. D.,

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I have been assigned the exposition of John 15:14, "Ye are My friends if ye do the things which I command you".

The topic as formulated is "Friendship with Jesus through Obedience to His Commands".

I regret that I have not had the privilege and the benefit of all the Conferences dealing with the Gospel of John, which Dr. Sears so aptly termed the "Heart of Christ". And especially would I have enjoyed Drs. Sheldon and Mackay, as in your last Conference they treated specifically of matters closely and even vitally related to the topic assigned me.

All the utterances of Jesus are of importance, but especially are those accentuated which fell from His lips as He moved tenderly yet resolutely forward into the deepening shadows of Gethsemane and Calvary. They were the farewell words, the dying legacy, of One who in a few short hours would breathe out His life amid the awful agonies and bitter humiliations of the Cross. We would come then into this chamber of the dying with bated breath and utmost reverence, and listen with deepest attentiveness to the words which hold in themselves an immortality of significance. Among them are the words immediately before us, "Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you".

Four things emerge out of my study of this statement.

1st. The Absolutism of Jesus, involving His possession of Deity.

No mere man would dare assert himself in this form. For any compelled obedience, as between man and man, leads not to friendship, but to serfdom and to slavery. It is but the prelude to shackles and to stripes and to hatred. But as we throw our thought over the larger area of Christ's teaching throughout His whole ministry, we find this indirect yet vital assumption fully and positively maintained in the discourses of our Lord. In His masterly "Sermon on the Mount", which title Prof. Gibson disclaims as being altogether too inadequate and for which he would substitute Matthew's own term, "The Gospel of the Kingdom", as "the grand charter of the commonwealth of heaven", Jesus directly makes the issue as pertaining to authority between Himself and others, when He says again and again, "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, \* \* \* but I say unto you" (Matt. 5:21, 22, 27, 28, 33, 34, etc.). In the tenth chapter of this Gospel, He declares, "All that ever came before Me are thieves

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and robbers; *I am the door*" (John 10: 8, 9). One day, when great multitudes were following Him, He startled them and has challenged every generation since, by the sweeping words, "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14: 26). These are but samples of many direct and of more indirect, but none the less forceful claims which Jesus makes upon men for their recognition of the supreme place which He must hold in their affections and service growing out of the divine nature which inheres in Him, and to which His life, His teachings and His achievements give witness.

To an ordinary human being possessing only the attributes and powers of our common humanity, yet making such a tremendous claim as this upon his fellow mortals, the answer would be disdain and contempt, and if persisted in, would mean either an asylum for the insane or the walls of a prison. But when made by this one unique world-shadowing character, whose influence augments with the centuries, who is being recognized by increasing millions as "very God of very God", as the "eternal Son of the Father", as "God over all, blessed forevermore", then this claim, absolute as it is, and all inclusive as it is, in its nature and in its duration, is recognized as being indeed most reasonable, and appeals in the strongest manner to the thoughts and affections of men. Only as Christ possesses all that is involved in Thomas' confession, "My Lord and My God", has he any right to say or any power to enforce, "Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you".

Another look at my topic, "Friendship with Christ through Obedience to His Commands" seems to suggest—

2nd. A reversion of the natural order.

Obedience is a product, not a cause. If we have read our New Testament aright we have held that Love is the mother of obedience and at once a kindred passion to that we are interpreting springs to the surface. "If ye love Me, ye *will* keep my commandments" (John 14: 15, R. V.), and another of similar import, "If a man love Me, he will keep my words" (14: 23); and Paul in his famous and unequalled panegyric of Love in the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, makes it the inner and potential seed out of which everything springs and apart from which everything is valueless and fruitless. And yet obedience as productive of love finds weighty indorsement not only from the passage before us, but from others. Do we not find in the discussions and differences between Paul and James as regards faith and works, a kindred distinction to this between love and obedience? James insists that works are productive of and necessary to the salvation of men, while Paul insists that faith, and faith alone, is the basis of man's acceptance with God. Jesus says in the fourteenth chapter and twenty-first verse of this Gospel, "He that hath My commands and keepeth them; he it is that loveth Me"; *he* and no one else, for that is the real significance of it. The man who has taken the commandments of Jesus into his heart, made them a part of his very nature, woven them into the very texture of his

moral and spiritual being; *this man* to whom the commandments of Jesus are a delight, a joy, yea, have become the very passion of his soul, "he it is", and he only, says Jesus "*loves me*". May we not say then that love dictates obedience, but obedience issues in a higher love? There was a time in the relations of Jesus and His Apostles when He considered them as "servants". But in the progress of their intercourse as they grew to know Him more clearly and to discern His nature and His mission, and He to know them more closely and mark the steady growth of their receptivity and the taking on of likeness to Himself, He recognizes their fitness for still closer relations, and says, "Henceforth, I call you not servants, but friends". Their obedience had led up to a higher friendship.

The truest view, rather should I say, the true view, looks upon these relationships, not as separate or as antagonistic, but as merging into a higher unity and characterized by—

### 3rd. Co-ordinate and alternating interaction.

Love incites obedience; obedience intensifies love, and so on through the varying experiences of life, deepening confidences, developing friendship, producing and enhancing likenesses, changing from glory to glory by the Spirit of God. And thus the onward, upward, outward processes of the spiritual life move, bearing the soul steadily and blessedly into the deeper intimacies and mysteries of a friendship which has eternity for its field of action and God for its eternal object. One has likened this growth to a benefactor who has rescued a maiden from poverty and misfortune, has placed her in favorable conditions, has given her educational advantages, has watched her remarkable development in intellectual acquirements, in graces of manner, in qualities of character, in all womanliness of nature, until philanthropy has changed into sympathy, and sympathy into friendship, and friendship into affection, and affection has laid himself and all that he possesses at the feet of his erstwhile ward and in wedded love the highest happiness of life has found expression. And so the soul, redeemed by the philanthropic love of Christ, won to service by its own great needs and the knowledge of the divine compassion, responds in obedience and enlarges in affection and becomes increasingly worthy of confidence until all the wealth of Deity—is poured out upon it, the human becomes divine and God is all in all.

A strong if not conclusive suggestion of this interaction and mutual dependence is seen when you place in close contact the cognate passages, "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commands," and, "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love". Love leads to obedience and obedience makes love permanent, and incidentally here is a sovereign remedy for, or preventive of, the lamentable experiences of backsliding. In the equilibrium of both hemispheres, the one of love and the other of obedience, is found the rounded, the completed, the symmetrical, the balanced, the resplendent globe of finished Christian character. In these interactions may be traced the shining stairways ascending to God; the grades of growth in the spiritual processes; the rungs in the ladder from the stony pastures of Bethel to the ladder's summit, on which stands God.

One other element, and that the most important remains to be considered, and that is —

4th. The *personal* element.

This is not a service of things, nor of institutions however venerable, nor of truths however definite and definitive. It is not obedience to creeds, however logical, nor to churches, nor to Bibles, nor to dogmas, which is first demanded of man. His first service, his primary summons, is to a person: "Come unto *Me*"; "As many as received *Him*, to them gave He power to become the Sons of God". The apprehension and appreciation of Christ, philosophically and theologically, both as to His nature and His work, may, and do differentiate themselves in a thousand and one forms, but the essential, vital thing is to get to the *person personally*, to come into contact with the living, breathing, triumphant, eternal Christ.

This was the power of apostolic preaching. Would you have the secret of Paul's impassioned and imperial ministry? He takes no pains to conceal it, but blazes it abroad in utterances that have stirred the centuries, in words that carry in themselves a deathless significance. "I know *Him whom* I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Tim. 1: 12, R. V.).

The dying Alexander, Professor at Princeton, recognized the majestic meaning of that saying, when, having asked a friend to read to him the living word, the friend read this passage: "I know *in whom* I have believed". Professor Alexander put his trembling hand upon the arm of the reader and whispered, "Stop, I will not have even a preposition between me and my Lord". But still closer even than this, and even more significant of the source of Paul's magnificent ministry, is that other utterance, "I live; and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God" (Gal. 2: 20). This personal love of Jesus Christ gave the initial impulse, the tidal force to the message of the Gospel as it has come rolling down through the centuries. It is the vindication of its presence and its power today.

Dr. Van Dyke sets this forth strongly when, speaking of the power of this Gospel of a Person, he says, "St. Chrysostom, St. Francis of Assisi and Savonarola had it; John Wesley and George Whitefield had it. In different ages and under different conditions, these men had the primal message which moves men to believe. And in our own age, under our own conditions, a like message has been proclaimed with power. Pere Lacordaire preached such a message in Notre Dame, and Canon Liddon in St. Paul's to listening thousands. Bishop Brooks made it thrill like a celestial music through the young manhood of America, and Dwight L. Moody has spoken it with vigorous directness in every great city that knows the English tongue. One thing only is the same in all of them and that is, the source of their power. Their central message, the core of their preaching, is the piercing, moving, personal Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God and Saviour of mankind. *This*, in its simplest form; *this* in its clearest expression; *this* presentation of a *person to persons* in order that they may first



know, and thus love and trust and follow Him—*this* is pre-eminently the Gospel for an age of doubt”.

In this summing up of the contents of his great book, Dr. Van Dyke only expresses the simple truth. In this fact of personal contact with the personal Christ lies the hope of the race. Every individual, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, master or slave, Saxon or Slav, male or female, Jew or Gentile, can come directly, personally to Jesus Christ and He meets him on his own level. Is he the hardened, cruel, pitiless jailer at Philippi? Jesus meets him in the midnight hour and before morning gives him the new name and the white stone. Is he the cultured, religious, phylactery-wearing Pharisee, who under cover of darkness seeks the Master? Jesus meets him with the statement that “as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in *Him* should not perish but have eternal life”, and in the Sanhedrin, this man, in the very face of the Lord’s enemies befriended Him, and when His sacred body was laid in the solemn tomb, it was Nicodemus who brought a hundred pound weight of myrrh and aloes that he might attest his loving friendship for his Lord. Is it the blind man at the gate of Jericho that cries out in his wretchedness, “Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me!”? The Master speaks, and lo, the blind man sees, and there bursts upon his astonished gaze the beauties of the earth, the sea and the glorious heaven, and better than these, the faces of friends, of children and of wife, and best of all, the radiant face of Jesus, the Christ, the Healer and Saviour of men. Is it contemplative Nathaniel sitting under the fig tree? He responds at once to the evidences inhering in the Master, and cries out, “Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel!” And so it has been through the centuries. Whatever divergencies of thought and divisions ecclesiastical, the irenic ground on which all could stand in sympathies and in mutual appreciation, has been that of personal knowledge of Jesus Christ, the personal contact in profoundest experiences and spiritual illuminations with the Lord Christ. Out of the depths of these personal experiences and these divine friendships, men have spoken with power to their fellow-men, for they have spoken of that which they have seen and heard, of Him with whom they have had sweetest communion, and through whose power manifested in them, they have stormed intrenchments and pulled down strongholds, driven back the armies of the aliens, marched triumphantly across life’s battlefield, and at length have furled their victorious banners by the great white throne. It is because of “having not seen, they love, and in whom, though seeing Him not, they believe”, that He takes them into this divinest friendship, this holiest intimacy, and makes known to them the resources of His Kingdom, the infinite wealth of His own nature, and still says to them, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him”.

Such friendship transforms obedience into passionate service and makes life all luminous with the presence and power of God.

\* "THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE."

(ST. JOHN 17.)

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In that unique composition, the interpretation of which occupies these Conferences, there are dominant notes and chords—the grace and truth that came, light and darkness, life and death, the Father, Saviour, Comforter—and these have been struck by skilled hands during the past months. Today I would touch on a minor theme in the Gospel.

As I understand the purpose of those who have instituted these gatherings, it is, in part, to secure interdenominational sympathy by common study and meditation upon a portion of Scripture which gives the deepest insight into the heart-life of Christ and the Father. In part, the purpose is to bring together professional students of the Bible, with preachers and people, for that communion which must develop when men speak often together of the Lord whom they love, even as he is revealed in this wonderful Fourth Gospel. If I am right in my apprehension of the purpose in this Conference, is not the thought which is so prominent in the seventeenth chapter of John, the thought of unity, a peculiarly appropriate one for our consideration?

The conception of unity between Christ and the Father is a prominent element throughout the Gospel of John from the opening section, where the Word is declared to have been with God from the beginning, on through such assertions as "I and the Father are one" (10:30), "I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love" (15:10), and through such appeals as, "If you do not believe me believe the works, that you may know that I am in the Father and the Father in me, or else through the very works believe" (14:10, 11). Through these, on to the last discourse and prayer before the betrayal, we may trace this theme, coming out again and again.

The unity between Christ and the disciple, too, appears somewhat, even outside of the seventeenth chapter,—“He that abideth in me and I in him, this one beareth much fruit, because apart from me ye are not able to do anything”. Another phase of unity, that of man with man, is also presented here and there in John's Gospel. It appears in the picture of one fold, one shepherd (10:16), or “the gathering together into one the children

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of God that are scattered abroad" (11:52). The *bond* of triple unity is likewise emphasized, "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love" (15:10). We find, then, in the Gospel of John, the unity of Christ and the Father, the unity of Christ and the disciples, the unity of the disciples with each other, and the bond of this threefold unity.

Paul, as well, emphasizes the necessity of unity among the followers of Christ. He beseeches them to walk worthily of their vocation, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, urges upon them their one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father above all, through all, and in them all (Eph. 4:3 ff). For the Romans he prays that they may be of the same mind one with another, according to Christ Jesus. The writer of Acts emphasizes the fact that the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul. The thought of the unity of Christians and its bond in the common hope and common Lord, is, indeed, confined to no one chapter and to no one writer in the New Testament, but this comes nowhere else to such beautiful and complete expression, I think, as in the chapter which we are to consider this afternoon.

The constantly widening circles of inclusiveness in the divine prayer, recorded in John 17, give opportunity to develop the complex relations of the theme with all possible clearness. In the opening verses, when Jesus prays for himself, his essential and eternal oneness with the Father is *assumed*,—"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was". The circumference of the petition soon widens to include those to whom Christ had manifested his Father's name, to whom he has given the words which were given him, who have known that he came out from the Father and have believed that God sent him. As he contemplates his departure from the world, viewing it as though it were already accomplished, he prays, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father keep them in thy name, which thou has given me, that they may be one as we are one". The next verse makes even more definite the ground of his anxiety for them, "While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name".

With the widening of the prayer to include his followers, as well as himself, the unity of Jesus with God, which has been his strength and power through all the years, becomes the norm of the union which must exist among the disciples now that their leader is to depart and leave them in the world,—“Keep them in thy name that they may be one as we are”. Marcus Dods explains this phrase, “Keep them in thy name, that they may be one”, as meaning that the retention of the knowledge of the Father which Christ had imparted to them would make them one. The *name* seems to be the knowledge of the Father which had been given to Christ for revelation to the disciples, and this knowledge it is that will make them one, as Christ and God are one.



In commenting upon the inaugural vision of Isaiah, George Adam Smith exclaims: "The vision of God—this is the one thing needful for worship and for conduct". That seems to be nearly the thought of the eleventh and twelfth verses here, if we adopt the older text, on which the Revisers' translation is based, not "Keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me", but "Keep them in thy name, which (name) thou hast given me". "While I was with them I kept them in thy name, which (name) thou hast given me, and I guarded them". The name, we know, signified quite generally in Biblical writings the attribute, the function, or character. If the Christian church could but have kept with singleness of vision in the *name* of God, that is in the knowledge of his character and work as the one thing needful, its history would have been far other than one of so much discord; then we might have been one, even as God and Christ. I hope we are learning in these latter days that we may differ about the nature and manner of inspiration; that we may differ about forms of government and forms of worship, even about forms of ordinances or the exact method of salvation, and yet may be one in his name; one in the effort to know God; one in our faith that whatever else may be revealed to us or not revealed, we have a revelation of God in his name, in his essential character.

Again the circle of Christ's loving prayer widens, "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word, that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us". As Meyer says, "This ethical unity, to be specifically Christian, must correspond to its original type, '*Even as thou Father, art in me and I in thee*'". We have noted already how, in the Fourth Gospel, abiding in the Father's love is the state of that unity (15: 10, 11), doing the Father's works is the expression, nay, it would seem, the proof of that unity (10: 38). The prayer is that all who believe through the word of the disciples may live and move in the Father and Christ as they in each other.

Thus the thought advances, enlarging in the inclusiveness of its hope for Christian fellowship, and then it rises to a higher plane, in the thought of the possible grace that can effect such inconceivable union,—"*And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given unto them, that they may be one even as we are one*".

What is this glory given by Christ to make believers one, even as God and he are one? Perhaps we cannot answer with certainty. Many have been the suggestions from the days of the fathers onward. Their very number indicates the wide variety of aspects that the Christian's glory displays—the glory of the apostolic office (Chrysostom), the glory of the Christian life, of the life of Christ in believers, of sonship, of love, of grace and truth, or the glory on which the believers are to enter at the coming of Christ. It has even been ventured to interpret glory here as the same as that in v. 5, "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was", or in v. 24, "I would

that where I am they also may be with me; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me". If this be the true interpretation, then the words in v. 22 carry us far indeed, to the glory which cannot be completely and actually bestowed until we are where he is,—“And the glory which thou hast given unto me I have given unto them, that they may be one even as we are one; I in them and thou in me, that they may be *perfected* into one". We may well join in the exclamation, “What a strong bond of unity must lie in the sure warrant of fellowship in eternal glory!"

We have traced imperfectly this increasing thought through the widening circles of the chapter. To recapitulate briefly: Christ's unity with God is assumed as he prays, thinking first of his immediate departure to the glory which he had with God before the world was. Next he passes to those who are left in the world unguarded, and his unity with the Father becomes the standard of their unity with one another, in which they are to be preserved in the name of God revealed by Christ. The thought next includes all who are to come after, and the same standard of union with one another is anticipated for this vast company. Then the hope expands to include not only union of man with man, like the union of Christ with God, but the growing, deepening vision adds to the prayer that they all may be one, the fuller hope that in this unity they may be in God and Christ as the Father is in Christ and Christ in the Father. At last the divine prayer takes wings. With the thought of the glory that had been given to him, and which he had already, in his loving purpose, poured out upon men, comes the final stage of the vision we are following,—“I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one".

We may observe that in this latter part, another thought of John's Gospel appears inwoven with that which we have considered: “That they all may be one, in order that the world may believe that thou didst send me". In earlier chapters we have seen Christ appealing for belief in himself because of what he is; but if his personality fails to win conviction, demanding belief because of the works he does, the works of the Father (10:38; 14:10, 11). Now his audible voice and visible hand are no more to work the works of God among men. He is no more to move among men in physical presence, winning them as his divine character expresses itself in his human personality. After coming out from the upper room, he had given his disciples a badge by which they might be known as his followers. (Read John 13:33-35.) Now in the prayer we advance to the thought that this unity, which he anticipated for all believers, shall be the legible record to the world, not only that they are disciples, but that he, their Master, was sent from God. Even after the final expression, that they may be perfected into one, the *result*, that the world may know “that thou didst send me, and lovedst me, even as thou lovedst me", is again enforced.

I have drawn out to view only one or two threads of the wonderful weaving of this seventeenth chapter of John, which has been styled “The simplest in language, the profoundest in meaning in the whole Bible". That which might be called the central thought of this chapter has hardly

been alluded to, but the few verses considered may open to the attentive eye prophetic visions of possibilities for humanity which stagger the imagination. We can see how such truths overwhelmed the great soul of Paul when he wrote in the Epistle to the Ephesians of the unsearchable riches of Christ; in that third chapter the mystery of it all finds such wonderful expression: the riches of his glory, the possibility of Christ's dwelling in their hearts, the length and breadth and depth and height, the love of Christ passing knowledge, the fulness of God who is able to do above all that we can ask or think. Paul's great soul was flooded when the possibility of Christ's dwelling in men's hearts swept over him.

Such, Christian friends, is the possibility for humanity pictured in this seventeenth chapter of John. We have all contemplated it before, our eyes have grown accustomed to the light, perhaps, so that it no longer dazzles, and yet, if we stop and look once and again, we may see here the very face of God shining out between dark clouds of human sin and weakness. On the one side stands the record of the betrayer gone out into the night; on the other, the trial and death. And so down through the history, even to our own day, this light from God shines out, showing to man the possibility of a life at one with God and man, the possibility of a witness for Christ that cavil can not gainsay; and all through the history follow the black clouds on either side, the clouds of betrayal, denial and crucifixion, for we have not been one as God and Christ are one, we are not yet perfected into one, that the world may know that God sent Christ to make men at one with their fellow men and at one with their God.

If we view the ideal held before us in this vision of Christ and then view conditions as they are or have been, it may seem that the prayer of Christ can never be answered; but the signs are surely about us that we are at last beginning to turn toward a developing into unity. May we not read in the history of the church that is now making about us the promise that all who believe through the spread of the apostolic word will at last be perfected into one?

I am not discussing the detailed question of the advantages of unity or of multiplicity in church organization and creed. I have faith that when at last we cease to fight against God's keeping us simply in his name, those questions will be decided in accordance with the need of that future age, and just what that need may be human wisdom today can hardly venture to affirm. Rather I would desire that the words of this prayer, in their depth and simplicity, might ring on and ring ever in our hearts, that no one of us may have any part in delaying the answer to the prayer. God help each one of us so to live in our place that we may speed the day when all shall be one, even as God and Christ are one.



\* THE UNITY OF CHRISTIANITY AS REVEALED IN THE PRAYER  
OF CHRIST.

(ST. JOHN 17.)

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I shrink from trying to lead your study of this great chapter. There comes into my mind a saying of the great German pietist, Spener, that he never presumed to preach from a text taken from this chapter. But I guard myself against the strength of this quotation by venturing to think that he did not have the right idea about the house of God. His conception of the mysteries of God reminds me of certain houses wherein children are not expected to play for fear they will break the furniture. I do not believe that the house of the Lord God has been built upon that plan. I do believe that the Lord is willing to take the risk of a certain amount of broken furniture in his house, to the end that his children may learn to play, if they fully remember that they are playing, and do not presume to put on the airs of popes in his house.

Before one enters the chapter there are certain features of the Fourth Gospel of which I trust you will permit me to remind you. The first one is that, according to John, the Gospel is the mind of Christ. This book among all the books that have ever been penned by man is the most singular in its monotony, if one chooses to use that word. Nothing happens,—one may venture to say,—in the Fourth Gospel; nothing happens, but everything is. The whole Gospel is the mind of Jesus. From that point of view it is exceedingly becoming and beautiful that the culmination of the self-revelation of Jesus should be a prayer. For prayer, when we come rightly to understand it is the deepest of all our thinking. That, of course, is not true regarding the bulk of our prayers. I fancy that regarding the large part of our prayers the child's opinion about praying is largely true. You know what the child is apt to think about prayers. He believes that praying is an easy way to get things. The average child thinks that prayer is a substitute for hard work. And I am not sure but that one carries that conception of prayer a good way on his pilgrimage through time and space. But prayer rightly understood is the deepest of our thinking, it is the severest of all our labors. The very last petition of our life is "Lord, teach me to pray". "Teach me to pray, I care not what else Thou givest or takest away, teach me to pray", we say to the Master.

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\* Delivered at the Seventh Conference, held at the Central Congregational Church, April 13, 1904.

So it follows, if we understand prayer aright, that it is natural that in this wonderful book, the final self-revelation of the Master should be a prayer. What happens to us when we truly pray? Why this is what happens, the divine and the human come together. It is in prayer, if it be vital, and in prayer alone, that we know what revelation is. We do a little talking, but very little do we feel about vital praying, about vital revelation. But so far as we feel revelation with our hearts as well as theorize about it with our heads, it is in those rarer moments of real praying that we feel it, because it is in prayer that the mind of God presses irresistibly upon our minds; and it is in prayer that the word of God makes of our thought its medium, and through our lives publishes itself in terms of our experience. And therefore it is with noble propriety that in this book the last word of the self-revelation of the Master should be a prayer.

As we enter the chapter, this one thing should be carefully remembered regarding it, namely: that the Master's mood is not one of sorrow, but rather one of triumphant peace and joy. A good many of the standard commentaries on this book have gone astray at this point, in that they have found here and there a suggestion of melancholy in the Master's mood. But the key to this chapter is the last verse of the sixteenth chapter, and the key-word there is the word "peace". It is therefore in the mood of triumphant self-possession and exulting certitude that we enter chapter 17.

In the first verse Jesus says to His Father, "The hour is come, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee". Now we must be careful to get that word glory by the right handle. What does it mean? To glorify God means,—does it not?—to make Him intelligible. To glorify a great picture is to make it intelligible, to interpret it. To glorify a great man by some splendid biography is to make the man's mind and purpose plain to his fellows. So, there is but one way to glorify God, and that is to make His mind plain to His servants and children. To glorify God is to make His being and will intelligible to His children. Naturally, then, this is the way that Jesus sums up His work. He has made the mind of God luminous and intelligible to man. So His prayer is that God may glorify Him, that is to say, that God may crown Jesus as the interpreter of God to man. Now is not this what we mean when we call Him the Saviour? How are we saved? Why, we are saved by understanding God. We are saved by understanding what is deepest in life and God is the deepest thing in life. Salvation consists in apprehending God's mind about us, and Christ's prayer is that God may crown Him with the single glory of being accepted by man as the interpreter of God to man.

In vs. 2, 3, we are given Christ's definition of eternal life. "This is life eternal that men may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent". Now let us try to give to ourselves a simple definition of what we mean by eternal life. What I mean by it is a kind of life wherein life completely controls the machinery of life. That, to me, is the life eternal, a kind of life so rich and deep that life controls its machinery. One does not realize eternal life very often in this world, but once in

a while one does realize it, live it out. There are certain rare moments when the machinery of life is totally lost sight of in living: and life eternal, simply defined and apprehended, is just the art of so living that all the machinery of life is controlled by life itself. As a rule, we Christians so live that the machinery controls life. Any pastor who does not know this knows very little about his trade. It is the disease of the ministry—we ministers know it to our shame—it is the disease of the ministry that the machinery of the ministry oftentimes controls and dominates the life of the minister. Committees and societies of all kinds sometimes take the heart out of a minister. But there are rare moments when life controls all the machinery of life, and that is what we mean by the life eternal. So, life eternal is to know deeply the mind of God as Jesus publishes it, and only so can one have eternal life.

The central thought in the next section into which I have divided the chapter for the purpose tonight, namely, vs. 4-8, is the thought of the church. The language here does not use the term church. Sometimes the best way of thinking about a thing is not to name it. Jesus had not read Hobbes. But He was too great a teacher not to know the law which Hobbes lays down, that words are wise men's counters and the money of fools. The best way, sometimes, to think about a great thing is not to give it a definite name, for, when once you have named it, you are apt to think that you know it. How amusing it is sometimes to watch children. They come up to you with a problem and ask you to name it, and the moment you name it you settle it for them, and they put it aside. Names are sometimes the soporific of thought, so it is well that the church should appear here in thought and not in name.

I venture to think that the thought of the section is this: the ultimate heresy is our unwillingness or inability or incompetency to believe the best things about ourselves. Now, at first blush, that may seem a very foolish assertion to make. Slow to believe the best things about ourselves? Why, are we not filled with egotism? Are we not consumed with pride and vain glory? Do we not spend our lives in mutual admiration societies on the basis that we are to say pleasant things about other people with the understanding that they will reciprocate by saying pleasant things about us? And does not the church resemble such a society? Is it not an absurd thing to say that we are slow and unwilling to believe the best things about ourselves? Not a bit of it. It depends upon what we mean by the "best things". The best things are righteousness and truth, and they mean unlimited capacity for God and the good. This we are very slow to believe in and trust ourselves to. But this is the very essence of the Christian church, to teach men to believe the very best things about humanity. For the church rests upon the Incarnation, and unless the Incarnation is a big word covering up a very small meaning, this is the sum and substance of it. It is God's way of teaching us that God believes that we, sons of God, are capable of understanding God, of imitating Him, and of obeying Him to the uttermost. That is what the church of God is, a



society which Christ has ordained to make men believe the very best things about themselves.

In the next section of the chapter, vs. 9-11, the central thought is that it is through the church that Christ is to be glorified. "I have been glorified in them", He says. That is to say, without the church, Christ is as a man whose right arm is gone. Without the church, the Incarnation is like a blow under the water. The church is Christ's means of making His mind intelligible to the human race. And the church is to look to it that she does not, by her false definition of God, by her false conception of authority, by her false conception of unity, rob her Lord of His crown. And she robs God of His crown when she puts her interpretations of Christ between Him and the race He is seeking to save.

In the next section of the chapter, vs. 12-18, there are two main thoughts, that is, two main thoughts for my purpose at this moment. The first of these is the thought of Christ's joy as being fulfilled in those who believe in Him. Now, what is Christ's joy? I believe there are two elements in it, and that ultimately there are two elements in the joy of every imitator of Christ. First of all, it is the joy of a man who believes with all his heart in God. I repeat, it is the joy of a man who believes in God with all his heart. There is no joy like that of surrender to a great object. What is the true joy of a seeker after truth? That he may find the truth and surrender himself to it. What is the joy of the artist, seeker after beauty, but to find beauty and give himself to it? And what is the joy of the soldier when he has found the chance to offer his life for Fatherland, but to surrender to it? The joy of Christ is the joy of complete surrender to God. And this is the joy of the imitator of Christ.

The other aspect of Christ's joy is that of complete faith in man. I repeat, complete faith in man. How apt we have been to disconnect these two things. Faith in God we have been constantly talking about, but faith in man, how little we have spoken about that. But we cannot separate the two. What the Christ wanted to do was to make the two inseparable in our thought and life. Complete faith in God leads to absolute faith in man. What joy is there like unto the joy of him who, believing perfectly in God and in the capacity of man for what is best, can devote himself to making what is best intelligible to man?

In v. 19, we come to the deepest waters of the chapter, or, if one may change the figure, we come to the summit point of the context somewhat abruptly. We see the great High Priest offering up to God our humanity, which He has taken upon Himself. The Son of God takes our humanity upon Him, and by His offering to God rids it of its vanity and imperfection. We see the Son of God in His prayer to God saying for us, "I for My friends' sake consecrate Myself". Now, what does consecration mean? The scientist consecrates himself when he absolutely surrenders himself to the energy and power and law and mind of this mighty universe. Christ consecrates Himself when for love of His fellow-men He absolutely surrenders Himself to the power and mind and law of God. And it is all

done for the church's sake, that the church, they who call themselves Christians, may through Him be consecrated in the truth. Our English language here is defective and at fault in translating the Greek, for the Greek word *aletheia*, is a very large word. We need two words to render it, "truth" and "reality". This, then, is the prayer Christ makes, that we may be hallowed and consecrated by complete self-surrender to the truth and reality of God.

In the next section, vs. 22, 23, we come upon the objective point of the chapter, namely, Christian unity. "That they may be one as we are one". How are we to reach unity? God forbid that in these days, which have no theology, and which are so conceited that they think they do not need it,—God forbid that I should say a word to decry theology. For a man who goes about the church today with his eyes open, sooner or later must make up his mind that what the church needs above all things is a sane theology. Just at present our theology is in a mental state that might fairly be called mush, and we sometimes call our lack of clearness and definiteness tolerance and charity. We need theology. You will not misunderstand me, then, when I say that we cannot reach unity through theology, if theology be the primary thing; and we cannot reach it through definition, if that be the primary thing. We need theology, but woe be unto us if our theology masters us instead of our mastering it. Woe be unto us if our definition dominates us, for the object of a definition is to be the tool and servant of the mind. We need our definition, but it must be kept in its proper place and controlled by life. And I take it that the only way in which we, divergent members of the body of Christ, can be brought together is through a living revelation. It is well for us that, temporarily, we have lost our grip upon theology. It is well for us that, at present, we have lost our grip upon definitions, because the end of it all, if we know and believe that God's hand is guiding us, the end of it all will be that we shall gain, somehow, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, a mighty feeling of the invading and penetrating and healing power of God. Experience is always greater than definitions, and definitions must go back into experience to be made over again. Our theology, our definitions and creeds, must descend into the truth and reality of God, if we are to come together and stay together.

I must hasten on. The chapter closes with the great words, "That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them". It is only through the sense of the indwelling power of the personal Christ that we Christians of diverging creeds, of widely diverging ancestors, of hostile definitions, can come together. That means, I take it, that we must all strip our minds of our infallibility. There is nothing better than a good definition, and there is nothing more helpful than a clear and sane theology to keep the heads of Christians free from vanity and sentimental nonsense. But the bane of theology and definition is infallibility. We have to strip ourselves of that. I wonder if we can do it. We sons of men are born to infallibility as the sparks are to fly upward. Thus there is a tremendous

lot of infallibility around. We all believe we are infallible, though our sister church, the Roman Catholic church, alone makes a profession of it. Steele's witty saying about the difference between the Church of Rome and the Church of England is worth quoting at this point. "Yes", he said, "the Church of Rome is infallible and the Anglican Church is never wrong". That is the difference. We are all infallible in that sense, or pretty nearly so.

Now I wonder if we can strip our minds of this infallibility which is just man's cheap substitute for God's truth, man's cheap and easy substitute for God's reality. If we are to reach anything like real church unity we must substitute the hard thing for the easy thing, and the costly thing for the cheap thing. But the hard thing and the costly thing is the real, vital sense of the invading and prevailing and redeeming revelation of the living Christ. The easy thing is an infallible church, an infallible priest, an infallible theology. When once we have made up our minds that we have got it, we can put an insurance policy in our pocket, lay our heads on our pillow and go to sleep; and when we wake up, we shall waste some of our time in damning and excommunicating those who have not put their heads upon the same pillow.

But this is ecclesiastical unity; the unity that Christ speaks of is the unity of Christians who have taken the hard and costly thing for their task and heritage. It is the unity of men who believe with all their hearts in God, and in man, and who, by means of that vital faith, keep their traditions and their preferences under control. We are not called on to belittle our traditions. Mine are exceedingly precious to me, and so are yours, I doubt not, to you, or you would not be here. But the beauty of it is that we can, by the help of the living Christ, make our traditions our servants, keep them from dominating us. From this point of view, one object of a good definition is that we may outgrow it. Put a definition between you and revelation and you block up the entrance to revelation, you shut yourself off from its growth and stunt yourself. But keep your definition under control, and then it is a road over which you go to a wider definition, if it please God to let you live long enough to find it. Your difference from your fellow Christian will inspire you to seek for your unity with him. Then you will thank God that all Christians do not think as you think. You will convert what you honestly believe to be your superiority over him into a means of approach to him. You will learn that in the kingdom of God as Christ has built it, the objective point is difference in unity. We are to abound in our differences from one another. We are not to be ashamed of that aspect of truth which the living God hath disclosed to us. Rather we are to be proud of it, to publish it by every means in our power. But we shall control it. We will not let it control us. The love of God is in us all. His living revelation fills our hearts. Because we differ, we agree to glorify Him who causes us to differ. So, shall He, like the master of a great chorus, bring out of our diverse traditions and interpretations, a grand hymn of praise to the only true God and to Jesus Christ whom He hath sent.



## \* SANCTIFICATION IN THE TRUTH.

(ST. JOHN 17:17-19.)

BY REV. D. W. FAUNCE, D. D.,

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The committee has assigned to me the central petition in Christ's great High Priestly prayer, as recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel at the seventeenth verse. It reads as follows: "Sanctify them in Thy truth, Thy word is truth".

Let me read, that you may have the connection, the verses that immediately precede and follow. I read from the Revised Version, v. 14, "I have given them Thy word"; v. 16, "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world"; v. 17, the verse we are to consider, reads: "Sanctify them in Thy truth; Thy word is truth". And this is followed, in v. 19, by the words: "For their sakes I sanctify Myself that they also may be sanctified in truth".

In reading these tenderly expressive words, I have not heeded the request of one of the most intelligent and devout Christians I have ever known. "Pastor", she said, "please never read that prayer in the seventeenth of John in public again". The pastor supposed there had been some mistake in emphasis. "Oh no, not that", was the quick reply, "but this: that prayer of love and agony should only be read when one is alone, on his knees and in tears".

We sympathize with the devout feeling so earnestly expressed. But we are permitted, also, to remember that devotional study may be as devout as prayer itself. Our Lord, in the gift of the promised Holy Spirit to John, caused this prayer to be put into the record. We may, then, be permitted to read it, to study it, and to attempt its devotional interpretation. Devout students in all ages have felt that through these central words in this central part of this great prayer, we get further back into the depths of Christ's own soul than through any other words that ever fell from those holy lips,— "Sanctify them in Thy truth; Thy word is truth. For their sakes I sanctify Myself".

In this devotional interpretation notice, first of all, that this prayer is the one true "Lord's Prayer". In it He prays. By a mistake which it is too late in the centuries to correct, we are accustomed to call the prayer that begins "Our Father, which art in heaven", "The Lord's Prayer". But that prayer should have been called "the disciples' prayer". Our Lord does not even once use it Himself. He the rather puts it into the mouth of

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\* Delivered at the Eighth Conference, held at All Saints Memorial Church, May 11, 1904.

His followers who had said, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples". That prayer is now known to be a compilation in part from Jewish prayers of that time. The Jews of that age, following their Old Testament, called God "Father" in their prayers. Jesus could never Himself have employed one of the petitions in that prayer,—“Forgive us our trespasses”. No perfect soul can truthfully make use of those words. On the other hand this prayer—this sinless prayer of the seventeenth of John, which should have been called "The Lord's Prayer", was prayed only by Him. It is so holy that on any other lips than His it would be profane. Even He could pray it but once. In it His heart found its holy vent. Though in one part of it He prays for His disciples, He does not notice that they are present. He is in His closet alone with God. They two, the Holy Father and the Holy Son are speaking with each other. They are in the very act of communing. Let us be still. The time, the place, the persons are sacred. "Let all the earth keep silence before Him".

Only that He left on record this prayer should we dare speak of it. But here it is; and therefore in no sense acting as spies on our Lord's communings with His Father, we may, with hushed heart, venture to look and listen.

And the *time* when He offers this prayer is especially significant. He has so nearly completed His work that He conceives of it as already done. "I have finished", "I come to Thee", He says. He is through with Calvary and the resurrection and ascension, in His thought: "I come to Thee". Contrast with this prayer the petition popularly called the Lord's Prayer, as to the time of their respective utterances. In the prayer He puts into the lips of disciples—the one commencing "Our Father", He is teaching beginners in discipleship. Had that prayer been given further on in their development, would He have omitted from it the very things for which He afterwards told them to pray, viz.: the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the asking of all in His name? The prayer at that earlier time could not have had the fulness of the New Dispensation. Let me not be misunderstood. That prayer, that "disciples' prayer", was absolutely perfect for them at that time; and it is in its general form and its whole spirit, not so much a stiff mould as a generous and blessed model of prayer for all time. But what a contrast between that "disciples' prayer" and this "Lord's Prayer" in the seventeenth of John. It is not in John "Our Father", the united petition of disciples, but it is "Holy Father", the single separate term of sole use in the intimate intercourse between God and His "Only Begotten Son" as that Son is about to resume the native heaven and the dateless years of His eternity in the bosom of His Father.

Notice, also, the order of the petitions in this prayer. He prays first, (vs. 1-5) about *Himself* that God will glorify Him. He prays second, (vs. 6-19) for the *Twelve exclusively*. He prays third, (vs. 20-26) for all *future believers*.

Now it is of the utmost importance that we notice that the seventeenth verse, the verse which we are studying, comes in the second division, viz.:

that of the petition for the Twelve. He asks two things for His Twelve (a) negatively, that they may be "kept from the evil"—or as the Revision has it, and very many other versions—that they may be "kept from the Evil One". Then (b) comes the positive petition, "Sanctify them in Thy truth; Thy word is truth".

"Sanctify them"; the word "sanctify" itself means to separate—simply that. The root idea of the word, taken alone, is not holiness but separation—separation not from what is impure but from what is common. It is constantly used in the Old Testament, not only about persons, but about things no longer common, because set apart for God's peculiar service. Twice only does Jesus use the word about Himself. He says (John 10:36) that He "was sanctified" *i. e.*, "set apart", and "sent into the world". In this prayer (v. 20) He says "I sanctify Myself". God has "sanctified" Him, *i. e.*, set Him apart; and now, in view of the culminating cross and resurrection, He sets Himself apart, dedicating His final hours to His distinctively redemptive work. And here and now, He prays that the God who had thus sanctified, *i. e.*, dedicated Him to a peculiar mission, would in like manner sanctify, dedicate, consecrate them to their mission, in furtherance of "the truth".

And now with this idea of sanctification as a dedication and a consecration to one's work, a meaning gained from Christ's own use of the "sanctify", we can come back to our seventeenth verse, "Sanctify them in Thy truth".

He has the Twelve in their peculiar needs exclusively in mind. See the exact position of these men. That they had been regenerated before He ever met them seems almost certain from His words "Thine they were"—*i. e.*, they were Thine before they were Mine. Then, next, they became His disciples, by believing that He was the Messiah. Next, they were chosen to become His apostles. They are soon to enter upon that apostolic work, and He prays for them. He says not one word about their personal character; not that personal character was unimportant. But He has, just now, another matter in view. Never such a mission before committed to any human being. And unless something special is done for His Twelve, His Gospel will fall stillborn, and the world will never know anything accurately about Him. He might almost as well never have come. Up to this time they had constantly blundered, not about the facts—there they were the best of witnesses about matters of fact. But they had blundered about the meaning of the facts. They had lacked any comprehensive grasp of them. They had no idea of the relation of part to part and of each part to the grand whole of His mission. It needed something vastly more than that, that they should be perfected in personal character. They saw the things and heard the words; but He had to tell them, not in any impatience, but in profound pity, "How is it that ye do not understand?" Moreover, the greatest Gospel facts had not yet occurred—facts that would be the key to all the others. The Lord's death and resurrection, clear to Christ's forseeing eye, were hidden from the Twelve at that time. And Pentecost,



which would bestow upon them new vision, giving them the lacking grasp of related fact and correlated doctrine, had not come to them. But soon there would be light flashing back on all He had ever done and said. Soon—very soon—there would be a fulness of truth into which they would enter, as some of them had entered into that radiant Shekinah cloud on the Mount of Transfiguration. And this is His prayer, that when this time of revelation comes, they may enter into it; “Sanctify them in Thy truth; Thy word is truth”. Notice the preposition our Lord uses. Scholarly criticism, as in the Revised Version, discards the word “through” not so much as erroneous, but as lacking in fulness, and unites in translating “*in* Thy truth” instead of “*through* Thy truth”. The conception is not only more correct but more significant. It is “*in* the truth” as a man stands in the atmosphere that surrounds him on every side, and breathes in the vital air; “*in* the truth” as a man comes out of mist and even out of darkness and stands in the sunshine where all things are flooded in the light from the heavens above him; “*in* the truth” as a man emerges from the loneliness of a solitary existence into a region throbbing with a new and intense life; “*in* the truth” as in a shoreless ocean filled with the God whose great name is the God of truth, and whose Only Begotten Son can say “I am the Truth”—the Truth itself.

And notice how our Lord divides men, putting their moral positions in sharpest contrast. He says “in the world”, and over against it He puts “in the truth”. He names the dominion of the Evil One as “in the world”, and puts over against it the “in Thy Truth” of His Holy Heavenly Father. Here, as in all His teachings, He sees two antagonistic kingdoms, with their respective heads and members, their opposing principles and potencies, their utterly unlike aims here and ends hereafter; and His conception is that every man is in the one or the other. And Jesus prays that these twelve men, while they must remain on this material earth so as to carry out His purposes, may not be morally and spiritually in the element which He calls “in the world”, but may be submerged and absorbed in that opposite element which He calls “the truth”. You will notice that Jesus uses first the definite article “the” truth, and then uses the personal pronoun “Thy”. The exact order of the Greek words is this: “Sanctify them in the truth of Thine”—literally, “in the Thy—truth”. The Greek language has nothing more intense, distinctive, definite. The conception is one of separateness in that kind of truth which is itself separated from every other; that truth in which the mind of God especially works in the redemptive kingdom.

And this point gained in our discussion, we may ask reverently and yet specifically, just what was comprehended by the term He uses in this prayer when He says “the Truth” or “the Thy—Truth”, *i. e.*, God’s truth. Plainly what He means here by “Thy Truth” is expressed by the phrase He makes exactly equivalent, “Thy Word”; “Thy Word is truth”. Remember our Lord’s Jewish birth and training. Our Old Testament was His Bible. He knew it, as none had ever known it before. Its

phrases came easily to His lips, He modeled His forms of speech on those in His Bible. He found in its earliest pages the idea of a God revealed as the "I am God"; a personal, and so a real God, over against the unreal and shadowy gods of heathendom; a God, who because He was a real God, was God over the whole realm of truth, and so was the very God of truth itself; and therefore the personal truth Himself. This God of truth Jesus found in His Bible, was always revealing Himself, manifesting Himself, uttering Himself in words—words that through the vocables of human language, became, whenever God used them, sanctified words as indicating their source and their consecration. Common words whenever used elsewhere, they were words set apart to a purpose when God employed them. They were words of God's truth, *i. e.*, God's word. Jesus found in His Bible constant formulas like this, "the Word of the Lord", "the Word of God". They were iterated almost to weariness; so that wherever not used they were always understood. They were not only in His Bible, but were in constant use among all the people He knew, as their names for their Bible. On occasion He quoted to them certain words in their Bible, and then called their Bible, as they themselves did, "The Word of God", saying as He quoted from it,—*"The Word of God cannot be broken"*. Quoting continually, He gives His Bible as final authority. He sharply distinguishes it from the ordinary Jewish literature, which He calls *"The Tradition of the Elders"*. In His Bible the longest Psalm, cut into portions under the letters of the alphabet for the temple service, contained not a verse in which this usage did not appear. Jesus born, bred, thinking, teaching, in house and temple and by the wayside, in public, in private, was familiar with such terms. And can any honest man have one lingering doubt but that however much more He meant by His phrases *"Thy truth"* and *"Thy word"*, He meant this much in His prayer, that the sanctification of His Twelve was in part to be accomplished in connection with the Book which He revered as *"the Truth"*—the Book He set men to studying so that they might see in its predictions *"the things concerning Himself"*. He said, *"Search the Scriptures"*—the Scriptures, in distinction from that vast mass of Jewish literature current in His time. Jesus saw in His Bible what the prophets themselves did not always see, the scarlet thread interwoven through all the fabric; the event to which every event recorded on its pages looked forward. And from the day when John the Baptist said, *"Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"*, each step of our Lord's life was a step towards that lifted cross and that emptied tomb. God had put the prophecy of it in the written Word. Jesus was to turn prophecy into fulfilment by the death He should accomplish at Jerusalem. But the Twelve did not yet see what the death and *"the rising from the dead should mean"*. And so He prays that they may have the sanctification in which they can see His true mission and so see their own. And then came Pentecost, with its first instalment of the answer. Then their vision was purged—then they saw as through God's eye, as through Christ's eye. Then their Bible was alert,

in every book of it, with their newly understood Christ. Then the isolated events had related meaning in which He, and they with Him, were sanctified to a peculiar mission among men.

Nor was the understanding of these events the all. Accurate record was needed, as a companion document for their Bible. For all the coming centuries there would be as much need of the record of the Christian facts as there had been of the occurrence of the facts themselves. Left alone to inexact human remembrance of them and to an unassisted sorting of what to record and what to omit; left to blunder about their meaning as they had done during His lifetime, their inaccurate narration of such tremendous facts would be worse than nothing. We can make mistakes enough without employing a mistaken guide. Such facts as these, as they must have more than human warrant, so the record of them must have more than human superintendence. It is plain that the only religion that can hold its place in the later centuries must be one that founds itself on historic facts recorded in authentic documents. Such documents must and will show something of the personality of their respective authors. God's inspiration, securing accuracy, would no more change their individual style of writing than change the features of their individual faces. They would still be men, but men "moved of God, and led by the Holy Spirit into all the truth";—the Greek has the definite article "the," *i. e.*, "all *the* truth". There would then be two things: First, a progressive document; one that goes on through the Old Testament into the New Testament; and then goes on through the New Testament as these men should give to the long centuries the facts and doctrines and duties that make up the Christian religion. A book that should give us only the *zeitgeist* or "age-spirit" of the era when written, would show us only the degree of moral and religious development the world had then attained. So that, second, there would be need of a book which, while a progressive volume, should have in addition, that divine inspiration and revelation which would ensure its absolute trustworthiness; its human and its divine guarantee alike given to the world. Take this perfect prayer of Jesus in the seventeenth of John, which so needs its perfect record. One sentence omitted, through John's lapse of memory, one phrase supplied by him, and the whole devout world would feel the difference. The prenticed hand may spoil perfection of the statue as surely as the mailed fist of the iconoclast. The need of perfect record may be more *conspicuous* in this perfectly holy prayer of our Lord, but it is not less real elsewhere. Do you wonder, then, that Jesus prays *especially* for men with such a unique mission—"Sanctify them in Thy truth; Thy word is truth"?

Such was His prayer. And now what was the answer? It was this: Their first apostolic work was their personal testimony as to Christ's resurrection. They publicly testified that they themselves had seen Him alive after His death on the cross; had seen the healed wounds, had eaten with Him, talked with Him and had been commissioned by Him, after His resurrection. That fact established, all Christian facts would be



comprised in it. Resurrection proved previous and peculiar death, previous and peculiar life, previous and peculiar birth, previous and peculiar existence in a dateless eternity. There was to be a granite basis of veritable fact for Christianity. And this was it. Paul, in order to become an apostle and so be able to bear this witness with the others, had to see, on the way to Damascus, the Christ risen after His death, and to get from His lips the apostolic commission. First of all these men preached an oral Gospel. It was about "Jesus and the resurrection". But, by and by, when chosen men came to write out the facts, doctrines and duties they had preached, their writings took two forms; the factual or narrative form, and the doctrinal form. Paul, whose four great Epistles were written before any one of our four Gospels, took the great facts, and looking back upon them through the lens of Christ's resurrection—remember He saw the risen Christ—conceived of them in their grandly comprehensive meaning in these Epistles which are the most primitive of our Christian documents. So that to get "back to Christ"—nearest to Him through the earliest of the Christian documents—we must go back through Paul. Subsequently the four evangelists, giving us the great facts also, fill in with their delightful detail the sacred story of their ever blessed Lord. Those who wrote were supported by the consenting testimony of the other apostles; and so there was given to men, the world around and the ages through, the imperishable record of Christian fact, of Christian doctrine and duty found in this New Testament. And so Christ's prayer for them was answered and they were "sanctified in the truth" as they entered into the new domain, breathed in the new atmosphere and felt the new vitality of this Gospel.

Some interpretative inferences may be briefly named:

I. Sanctification, whether for an ancient apostle or for a modern believer, is through a knowledge of the "Word of God". Contrasting the transient and imperfect Mosaic Dispensation with the perfect and perpetual Christian Dispensation, an inspired man has said, "By one offering Christ hath perfected forever them that are sanctified". We must know our Bibles; since the degree of sanctification must bear a relation to our knowledge of God's Word. This peculiar Book must have its peculiar study. Some of us can remember that when in the district schools, Milton's "Paradise Lost" was used in "parsing", so called; the old fashioned grammatical exercise. But did any one ever come in that way to know Milton's sublime Epic? To study the Bible merely as "literature", as an exercise in "historic knowledge" or in "pedagogic method", is even less likely to give one an understanding of the Sacred Volume and to sanctify the man who does it. "Literary study" alone, or "historic study" alone, in college, in seminary, in Sunday-school, or even in the closet, is liable to result in misapprehension. You may not, must not study it as you study any other book. Unique, let it have its unique method. Christ is the focal point to which every thing must be seen as converging, if you would know your Bible. "To Him give all the prophets"—and every historian was

also a prophet—"witness". All gathers in Him. Among the mountains in summer I meet men who are making sketches. They transfer to one canvas a rock, to another a tree, to a third that mountain and that cloud. By and by these bits of loveliness are all to be assembled into one completed picture. So each separate virtue shown by any man mentioned with applause in this volume, is gathered up, made perfect and exemplified in Jesus Christ. It is the same with all events in Biblical history. Seen with anointed eye, they are to be studied in their inexhaustible connection with this inexhaustible Christ. We are to be "sanctified in the truth". "Thy Word", said Jesus, looking up into the consenting eyes of His Father—"Thy Word is truth".

II. Sanctification is also the *experience*, in the depths of the human soul, of God's truth. The only subjective Christian experience that has any value is that wrought by the objective Christian facts made potent by the Holy Spirit. Hence we distrust all visions, dreams, impressions, impulses to do strange, unauthorized things. All is to be tested by the Word. And because you have not as yet come up and on and into the experience of a clearly narrated truth, do not discard it. To do that would be to make your own Bible rather than to take God's Bible. The man who puts his intellectual understanding, his moral intuition or even his alleged Christian experience as the sole test, is a man who allows God to teach him nothing. Nor hesitate, because, like all other truth, God's revealed truth has its mysteries.

A scout, when an exploring party was seeking the Pacific, mounting a hill, cried out, "I see it". "See what?" shouted the leader. "The Pacific", was the answer. "How wide is it?" "About ten miles", answered the scout. "Ah!" replied the leader, "if it were the Pacific you could not see across it". Let us learn that truth is always wider than our present experience of it. Truth, distrusted in the impatience of youth, gets itself believed in the stress of middle life, and fully trusted, as the very sheet anchor of hope, in the experiences of age. Much of God's Word awaits our better understanding of it in the experiences of eternity when we shall study it in the light of the countenance of God Himself.

A few parenthetic words just here, may not be out of place about things outside "the Word", which are sometimes thought to have sanctifying power.

In the presence of Niagara, there is awe; but the man who experiences it may be an infidel. In the presence of Munkacsy's "Christ Before Pilate", sympathetic emotion may be stirred in any unregenerate man. A song on "Calvary" drew tears from the one who had wept as freely at the theater over the play, the same evening. Touched by the tones of a soprano in a church choir a man swore that the solo was finely rendered. Esthetic feeling is not to be confounded with Christian experience. But when, first of all, the soul in its deepest depths has been really regenerated by the Holy Spirit, as He applies to it the great Christian truths, then esthetic feeling, like every other natural impulse, receives

its sanctification through the vital experience of God's truth. Mountain and plain, river and sea, God's sunrise and His sunset, man's picture and song are seen by the vital eye, looking through the new moral atmosphere of God's revealed Word ; are seen as "sanctified" objects, and so are made subservient to the soul's sanctification. Last night at midnight a sharp eye could dimly discern a few things close at hand. This morning the sun rose, and the wide prospect from horizon to horizon was visible. Any single acre of it was worth more than the whole round world perpetually sunless. Well might Bushnell exclaim, "This is another world since Christ came into it". Jesus said, "I am the light of the world".

But there is a further sanctification, in which *all* knowledge in the realm of divine truth and *all* profound experience of it in the human soul, leads a man on to the sanctified *doing* of God's will. Jesus calls His follower "the man that *doeth* the truth". Sanctification is not only of the head and the heart, but of the life. Only let us remember that the life is vastly more than the outward conduct. Life is that interior principle, the motions of which rule the exterior act. With this prayer of Jesus before us, let us seek to "practice the presence of God" in the deepest activities of the soul when we are alone with Him, when He opens His heart to us and we open our hearts to Him ; when we tell all our souls out to Him as never to nearest earthly friend, and He gives such communication of understanding in His revealed Word that we appreciate holy Rutherford's phrase when he speaks of "revelling in the truth". Such inward spiritual activity will save us from any superficiality in our religious life. Such "practice of God" in the depths of the soul will make us grow, not as the dead stone by accretion of particles to its surface, but as the plant grows, by absorbing into its inward life that on which it can thrive. We shall crave seasons of prayer and of meditation, in which the closed door of the closet will shut out the world and shut us in with God. Then there will be given at one time the experience of "the green pastures and the still waters" of God's own peace ; at another time, the experience of "the unspeakable joy" ; at still another time, the consciousness of a strength not our own to do or to suffer ; and yet, again, some verse of God's Word will be for us a Mount of Transfiguration, and heaven will seem to be opened. And it will be opened for us soon, not only in sanctified feeling but realized fact. One after the other we go into that world of eternal truth, to practice ourselves in those larger revelations that there await our coming. And what if our Lord, on the departure of each believer from the earthly service, looking up once more into the face of His Father, utters anew the final words of this wonderful prayer, now making it specific and personal, as He says,— "Father, I will that [this man] whom Thou gavest Me be with Me where I am that [he] may behold My glory".



## \* THE SELF-SURRENDER OF JESUS CHRIST.

(ST. JOHN 18:11.)

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In the crisis of his Eden trial the first Adam surrendered to self, in the interest of pleasure. In the trial of the second Adam He surrendered to God, when the certain issue was suffering. Eden and Gethsemane are forever set over against each other in the spiritual history of man. One act drove the man forth to look backward upon a gate policed by the cherubim, the other "opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers". The Self-Surrender of Jesus Christ is inseparably connected with three truths, The Will of God, The Problem of Suffering, and The Salvation of Man.

I. The immediate background of our Lord's question,—“The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?” was the Father's express will. “My Father presents it. It is not My natural human preference”. This gives us a humanity in Christ so genuine and essential as to be beyond impeachment. Paul holds fast by this when he says, in his great legal argument to the Romans,—“For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous”. Besides, the whole hinge of Christ's self-surrender turns upon His being truly man. The only and sole element in this cup, which made Him willing to drink it, was *the will of God*. The cup was bitter of itself, beyond any ever before presented to man. The angels yet desire to look into it.

Notwithstanding, it was mixed by the Father's hand, its contents have never been brought under human analysis in the full depth and range of their severity. Hence the difficulty in formulating a satisfactory statement of the Atonement. The Nicene Council, led by

“The royal hearted Athanase,  
With Paul's own mantle blest”.

was able to fix in the enduring form of sound words the truth concerning the person of Christ. But when our Substitute was passing towards the shadow of His Cross, He said to His disciples, “Whither I go ye cannot come”. As there were bounds set about the fiery mount of the law, lest any should break through to gaze, so about the sacred precincts of the suffering and death of Christ, there were fixed bounds, which the human mind has not passed. There were unexplored remainders, and unrevealed abysses, in the chalice of the Garden and the Cross. The transaction was

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\* Delivered at the Seventh Conference, held at the Central Congregational Church, April 13, 1904.

cosmic in its reach, since "He tasted death for every man". It was no less sufficient to obliterate time periods, for "this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified". An earthly king can do, only the Prince of Peace can undo, and thus turn back the retributive sanctions of human sin. In the mid-sea of His agony on the cross, when the air was thick with portents, charged with the penalties of the world's sin massed into one awful cloud, He cried out, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" For once He dropped the Father's name and in those preternatural hours fell back upon the naked justice of a holy God. Let Mrs. Browning speak of the impossibility even there of His desertion:

"Deserted! God could separate  
From His own essence rather,  
And Adam's sins have swept between  
The righteous Son and Father;  
Yea, once Immanuel's orphaned cry,  
His universe hath shaken,  
It went up single, echoless,  
My God, I am forsaken".

The voluntary element in the self-giving of Christ must not be overlooked in any just estimate of it. The objection to the idea of one man suffering in the place of another has overlooked the fact of personal will and deliberate choice in the matter. Even yet, it is difficult for men to see that our Master was not compelled to suffer by the decision of the Jewish Sanhedrin or the sanctioning injustice of the Roman governor. One of the most notable of His sayings, in view of the cross, was His word to His own zealous disciple, Peter: "Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

In effect He informs Peter how paltry his defence must be, when the serried columns of the celestial host were waiting to move upon His foes at the slightest signal from Himself. Earlier than this, Jesus uttered the classical declaration upon this fact of voluntariness in His suffering: "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father".

II. Not otherwise than by voluntary suffering could our Lord fill up the outline of prophecy. The animal sacrifices of the Jewish system failed in this voluntary element. For 1,500 years "dumb driven cattle" were led unwillingly to the altar and slain. And yet the offerer laid his hands upon the victim before its life was yielded up, thereby indicating that guilt was transferred to it, as in a picture. But these repeated offerings were only

symbols used for a term to foreshow One who should take our burdens and do so of His own free and self-chosen will. How clearly is this stated in the great historic comparison made by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith, sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me: In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God".

Frequently the law did not look beyond the shadow to the Coming Person of the Messiah. But when He appeared, men of insight, like the Forerunner, immediately saw it. Most clearly of all, our Divine Master recognized this suffering and dying for others, as an essential part of His mission. It was very difficult for the disciples—especially in view of Christ's manifested power—to understand this. They could not see how, with such reserve of power at command, He could submit to His enemies.

The same principle of help and suffering for another's sake is found embedded in nature, in society and in individual human life. Throughout the whole sphere of the natural world one thing seems to exist for another. The forces of nature join hands for mutual help. It is Ruskin, who says, "It is the working, and walking and clinging together, that gives their power to the winds, and its syllables and soundings to the air, and their weight to the waves, and their burning to the sunbeams".

Society is knit together by bonds of helpful union. The exchanges of commerce are the contribution of one part of the world to make up the deficiencies of another. What is the whole system of insurance, fire and life, but a plan to enable those who are fortunate to aid those who may be less so? The flame-swept city of Baltimore is now receiving millions of money from outside insurance companies to rebuild its desolate sites, because this principle has been organized into a vast business system. Even the professions are built in good measure upon the same basis. The physician studies the human body in my behalf—I have not time or opportunity.

And how in the whole range of common life, in the family and with individuals, we are living and dying one for another! Mothers yield up their lives for their children. How willingly are such sufferings endured! "Many waters cannot quench love", and many barriers cannot interrupt its mission.

The noblest part of natural history is connected with the fact of a bitter cup. The flag we honor has been baptized in blood in manifold wars and revolutions. It is like a palimpsest upon which one period of sacrifice has been written over another, until it bears successive legends of sacrifice.

III. The rank of Christ in this procession of those who love and suffer for others' sake is the highest. As "the Bloody Angle" on Cemetery Hill, at Gettysburg, was the high-water mark of the civil war, so His



cross was the highest stage ever reached by sacrifice, of one person for another's good. If we consider the dignity of the sufferer as the Son of God, and the depth of His sorrow as our surety, Calvary is the central spot in this world of sin and suffering. Even the dying thief discovered the innocence of Christ and said to his companion, "We suffer justly, but this Man hath done nothing amiss". The cross cannot be explained as something endured by our Lord on His own behalf. This deed of expiation was for us. If we raise the question, why could not God forgive without it? We reply, something was due to law broken, and society injured. Even the civil state does not forgive upon repentance simply. It requires an expiation, a time of liberty restricted, and service rendered for the damages inflicted upon the social order broken. The expiation of Christ was witnessed by other than human eyes. The company grouped around the cross constituted only a small part of "the great cloud of witnesses".

For this event was to reach depths in the heart of God which no one of the heavenly host had known, and hence, "peace through the blood of His cross, reconciles all things unto Himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven". Now we behold the Father moved by the sin and sorrow, the distress and anguish of men to such a degree as to take it upon Himself as His own suffering burden. For *it is* His burden. The Son of God was a personal volunteer, dying at the same time for man's sin and God's holiness.

"The Saviour, what a noble flame  
Was kindled in His breast,  
When, hasting to Jerusalem,  
He marched before the rest !

"Good-will to men, and zeal for God,  
His every thought engross ;  
He longs to be baptized with blood,  
He pants to reach the cross.

"With all His sufferings full in view,  
And woes to us unknown,  
Forth to the task His spirit flew ;  
'T was love that urged Him on".

The question of the Father's implication in the sufferings of the Son cannot be dismissed at this point. A great scholar has said of the mystery of the Trinity, that our lips can only stammer when we attempt to define it. And the question of the Father's sufferings is one about which we may humbly employ the Psalmist's words : "Such knowledge is too wonderful for us ; it is high, we cannot attain unto it". Still it remains true for us that He who suffered, said, "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father". If it be so that the mystery of suffering reaches up to the highest form of being in the universe, and inflicts its profoundest pains in the heart of the Eternal Father, we may discover here the most effective motive and leverage to induce the sinner to repent.

A late writer furnishes me with this incident :

"In a boys' school in Boston a form of discipline was once introduced which might be called a judgment infliction of unique character. For a certain transgression, the master himself, instead of the pupil, was to receive the punishment. The first time it was applied the guilty scholar broke down, and the school broke down. In principle, this gracious judgment-infliction was akin to that which under grace is applied in the Atonement ; and for a saving mastery over human nature, the principle is unequalled".

The contention of Professor A. R. Wallace in his bold speculation entitled "*Man's Place in the Universe*", has been in brief terms summarized by a personal friend. This is its contention : "That our earth lies near the center of the Milky Way ; that it is the only inhabited or habitable spot in the physical universe ; that man is the consummation of the whole cosmic process ; that the whole ordered creation comes to its crown on this planet and in the human species. I say it may be a mere speculation, though he is one of the foremost scientists of the world who has indulged in it. Whether it be a speculation or not to say that the earth is the focus of the cosmic movement, it is not speculation to say that the focus of the historic human movement is the Incarnation of the eternal Son of God in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. The learned man, therefore, is the man who recognizes Christ, not only as 'the sublimest image ever offered to the human imagination', but as the heart of the heart of the universe, without Whom, and apart from Whom, knowledge is empty of life, a formula vacant of power, a shell without a kernel ; in Whom the physical creation finds its bond—for in Him all things hold together—and in Whom the world of human knowledge finds its glory and its crown".

There is a majestic sweep of vision in the conception, which is not an unworthy echo of the highest attitudes of inspired thought in Paul, and which suggests a possible outcome of the bitterness of Christ's cup, quite as inclusive as anything in the present Epistles of the great Apostle.

IV. Our last general consideration leads up to the relation between Christ's self-surrender, and our recovery from sin. Self-surrender is the crucial point for the sinner. Here, indeed, the King sets the fashion of the court. When a few years since a distinguished theological teacher affirmed that the supreme business of the preacher was to induce men to obey Christ, considerable adverse criticism was aroused. But there is no gospel in Old or New Testament for the disobedient man. The heaviest burden of a soul confirmed in sin is God Himself, and so the fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God". He refuses to agree with his adversary, either quickly or slowly, but he is unable to dislodge Him, and hence his misery. I have heard of a new convert to atheism, who said to a coterie of fellow unbelievers, "I have gotten rid of the idea of a Supreme Being, and I thank God for it". The God driven out at the front door re-enters at the back one, for the intellect of man is in revolt against the ungodly heart, and will assert its rights under the eternal franchises of reason.

It is Browning who says : "I report as a man may of God's work—

all's Love. Yet all's law"! Herein the disciple is not above his Lord, or the servant above his Master. But if the cup with its bitter ingredients is presented to us by our Father, as that of our Saviour was presented to Him by His Father, we may avail ourselves also of His sufficient consolation. In His memorable prayer before the Garden and the Cross, He bridges over both, as His holy soul rests upon the consummation of both, in the measureless joy which was to succeed "the sharpness of death". The cup was not an end for Him, great as it was, and it behooves us to relegate it habitually to its place. The greatest of modern essayists has said, "The pencil of the Holy Ghost hath labored more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon". But the felicities of Solomon were not to be reckoned with the glory visioned by Paul. In the light of the latter, we may even challenge Longfellow's couplet,

" Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,  
Is our destined end or way",

for our gospel carries the golden bribe of righteous, enduring joy. Not the wilderness, but Canaan, was the end for Israel. The first question and its answer, in the old Catechism, is the summary of the best theology: "What is the chief end of man? To glorify God and enjoy Him forever".

Beautiful words are those of Lanier, in his *Ballad of Trees* and the *Master*:

" Into the woods my Master went,  
Clean forspent, forspent.  
Into the woods my Master came,  
Forspent with love and shame.  
But the olives they were not blind to Him;  
The little gray leaves were kind to Him;  
The thorn tree had a mind to Him,  
When into the woods He came.

" Out of the woods my Master went,  
And He was well content.  
Out of the woods my Master came,  
Content with death and shame.  
When Death and Shame would woo Him last,  
From under the trees they drew Him last,  
'Twas on the tree they slew Him—last  
When out of the woods He came.



\* THE CRUCIFIXION—"IT IS FINISHED".

BY RT. REV. THOMAS A. JAGGAR, D. D.,

BISHOP OF SOUTHERN OHIO.

(ST. JOHN 19:30.)

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar He said, "It is finished". And He bowed His head and gave up the ghost.

I have approached with awe the study of this, the most pregnant word in all history. How should I presume to look into the depths of the consciousness which, with almost its last breath in time, sounded the trumpet-note—*finished!* To speculate has seemed to me presumption. I have not dared to adopt the method of critical exegetes, who seem to jostle one another with fierce disputings around the cross. Many of them interpret it by the glory which followed—the Resurrection, Ascension and coming of the Holy Ghost.

I have chosen to "learn of Him" and by all that He has revealed of His consciousness, to travel up from the human side to all that we may know of this last word. I would find in the Christ His own interpreter and put no more into the word than He permits me to see there.

We are to ask, then, what this word must have meant in His consciousness, when, with a loud voice, "He bowed His head and gave up the ghost".

The words I shall use will be largely the words recorded of Him or spoken by Him.

The words which tell us all that we know of His childhood and youth are like the lines of some fine etching—few but strong and full of meaning. "The Child grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon Him". There was a genius for divine things and a divine inspiration which kept it alive, and made it more and more appreciative as His years increased. His quiet home at Nazareth afforded no great opportunities for religious instruction. But nature was beautiful, and the training of a Jewish home, and certainly the home of Joseph and Mary, would insure that from a child He would know the Scriptures. Probably He went with other children to the synagogue school, and sitting at the feet of the scribe, learned His earliest earthly lesson from the Book of Leviticus. He would attend the services of the Synagogue, where Moses and the prophets were read and occasional addresses delivered. A mind like His would be open to all the religious discussions around Him; and all the story of Israel

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\* Delivered at the Seventh Conference, held at the Central Congregational Church, April 13, 1904.

and Israel's hope would be a growing wonder to Him. It is said of Schubert, the German composer, whose musical genius, like that of Mozart, was born with him, that "his teachers had nothing more to do than to enlighten him as to that which lay in a state of semi-consciousness, as law, *within* him". The phenomenon, on the natural plane, of genius like that may reverently be used to illustrate the genius of Jesus for religion. We can understand how, from a child, as He was hearing of sacrifices, and burnt offerings, and sin offerings, there would be a semi-consciousness of some coming harmony—the harmony predicted by the Psalmist, "Lo, I come; in the volume of the Book it is written of Me, to do Thy will, O God! yea, I delight to do it. Thy law is within My heart".

We are not surprised to find Him, at twelve years of age, in the "midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions". He passes by the sights of the holy city and seeks the schools of the Rabbis. The promise of the Child—the wisdom and the grace—is budding in the Boy. I need not dwell upon the familiar incident. "The law in His heart" finds expression in the penetrating questions which He asks. The learned Rabbis are astonished at His understanding and answers. He feels that there must be larger meanings, some fuller inspiration beneath the letter of the law, which, with all its subtleties, they expound to Him. They wondered where this Galilean Boy had acquired His wisdom. He does not presume, but He is deeply stirred. A consciousness that He has something to teach and to do for God and His people deepens within Him. It speaks when His seeking parents find and gently chide Him: "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" or, in My Father's house? "My Father!" His mother, at His birth, had kept all the wonderful sayings about Him, and pondered them in her heart. But think of the distance now between His conception of God's purpose in Him and His relation to God, and even a mother's thought. We find the word Father used of God in a very few passages of the Old Testament, but never to describe His relations with the individual. Jesus says "My Father" with perfect artlessness and freedom from presumption. He thinks aloud, and the truths which have been stirring in Him are revealed. The spirit of the Boy has been growing into a conscious fellowship with God—a fellowship so close that, when He speaks now, His earthly ties seem far away and the Father of His spirit the only reality.

But He patiently goes down with them to Nazareth and is subject unto them.

Eighteen years pass before "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord", revived the dying hope of Israel. It seems to have been to our Lord the signal for action. The consciousness that He "proceeded forth and came from God" had been deepening within Him, and now the time had come to put Himself on the side of the reform which John preached. The "repentance", I need only remind you, was "a change of mind". It meant, as a preparation for the kingdom, a thorough revolution and readjustment of thought in the earthly

minds of the multitude. They must change their earthly, selfish, ambitious, literal and formal conceptions of the kingdom, and expect a kingdom which would account him only a descendant of Abraham, who is one inwardly, cutting down the proud pretensions of those "who bring not forth good fruit". There could be no such change of mind in our Lord. This *was* His mind. But John was preaching that preparation, which the ideal kingdom of His dreams demanded. It was clear to Him, that to do His Father's will, to "fulfil all righteousness", He must put Himself openly into conformity with that preparation. He avowed, therefore, in baptism the change of mind. "And lo, the heavens were opened unto Him and He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and coming upon Him, and lo, a voice out of the heavens saying, this is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased".

The moment He adjusted Himself to John's baptism "unto a change of mind", His mission as the God-man dawned fully upon Him. Whatever we may think about the objective appearance to Him and His forerunner, something happened which convinced John that this is the Son of God—"He that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit"—and realized to Jesus the fullness of His Father's presence and His anointing to be the Messiah of Israel. The law and the Gospel met in their representatives, and the Gospel was manifested at His baptism. "The law and the prophets were", said the Lord, "until John; from that time the Kingdom of God is preached".

"Immediately the Spirit driveth Him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil". It was the crisis of His life. Here He would determine how He should act in view of the opposition which He knew awaited Him. It is not essential to my purpose that I should delay here to enter fully into the circumstances, and the many interesting questions which invest the incident of our Lord's temptation. I have to do with it, on its subjective side, as an inward conflict which it certainly was, whatever the form may have been. It is natural to suppose that, absorbed in a communion and rapt in meditations beyond our power to conceive, He remained long oblivious to the needs of the body. When He came back to the earthly realities, "He hungered". Immediately the tempter whispered, "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread". Why not? He could do it, for He was the Son of God. To feel the force of a suggestion which does not seem in itself to be evil, is not sin; but to see the evil in it, and even for a moment to acquiesce is sin. "He was tempted, yet without sin". The sense of His moral responsibility was too strong in Him for the pangs of hunger to overcome it. The suggestion was enough. For a moment He felt its power, but more probably in His reason than His appetite. But immediately the law in His heart disclosed the evil and answered for Him, and through Him to the tempter, "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God". Because He was the Son of God, He would not command stones to be made bread for His physical needs. He was in the world to realize a kingdom which should not be "eating and drinking, but right-



eousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost". He must realize it by subjecting the prerogatives which He might exercise as a Son to the conditions of the humanity in which it was to be His sole business to manifest a life of the spirit. He must not save Himself. The flesh must be subdued to the spirit at every point where He might be tempted to help Himself.

Adroitly the tempter adapts himself to the "discovered mood" of the Saviour's soul. If you may not use your power for personal ends, surely you may presume upon your Sonship to cast yourself down from this pinnacle of the temple, and, by one splendid exhibition of your divinity, proclaim your Messiahship—for is it not written, "He shall give His angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands shall they bear thee up". It did seem as if some miracle like that might aptly introduce His work, and command at once the reverence and attention of the people. But, immediately, the word in His heart detects and repels the suggestion. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God". To determine where trust ends and presumption begins was for Him a difficult problem. He would not use His Sonship to save Himself. Could He dare too much upon His Father's love and power? The point to be strongly emphasized is, that in all these temptations, He holds Himself firmly in the human relation, He meets and defeats them as a man, and in the obedience of God's law for man. The temptation to presume is overcome by the determination to do His Father's will as a man, never presuming, never challenging a miracle by exposing Himself wantonly or unnecessarily to danger or death, never assuming that He may dispense with prudence, forethought and the plodding drudgery of obedience. Satan, in the last temptation, boldly unmasks himself. He showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, "All will I give Thee", he said, "if Thou wilt fall down and worship me". Wonderful issue—whether it be objective reality or vision. The anointed Christ—young and human—conscious of divine power—all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them—ripe for a great leader—but the cost a compact with evil—the alternative a cross with such light of the unseen and eternal beyond,

"As never was on sea or land".

The temptation was too coarse—it could only flash out its lurid blaze long enough to be seen, and then came the indignant reply, through which the God in Him gleamed like lightning, though it was still from the law in His heart that He spake, "Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve".

Completely dispersed from that hour was every doubt as to the method which He must employ to prove Himself the Christ of God. He sees clearly that He may not save Himself—presume upon God's help, nor win by popularity, compromise or conforming to the world's ways. He is put upon His manhood. He knew that the world would be against Him. He is determined, now, to meet and overcome it as a son of man in fellowship with God, but walking with Him by faith, not by sight, and learning obedience by the things which He must suffer. In all His ministry, from that

time to the end, this conception of His work as something to be done in the body—subject to its limitations, needs, infirmities and pains is always present to Him. He put away from Him, as from Satan, the suggestion that He should assert Himself outside of those limitations or attempt to escape them when they pressed too hard. The words of the Psalmist, as they are rendered from the Septuagint, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, express at least the idea which possessed Him: "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body didst Thou prepare for me".

What, we may ask now, was His conception of the work to be done in the body? It is clear that, from the hour of His temptation, He was committed to self-sacrifice. The shadow of the cross was upon Him, and it deepened in His consciousness down to the end. But the work to be done at such a cost; what do we know about that?

I do not find it necessary to limit myself, in the study of this question, to the Gospel of St. John, though I might properly do so, as the word "Finished" appears only there, and the authority of that Gospel is, I assume, accepted by this Conference.

As I study the story of His life variously recorded, I find that He began His ministry by preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. I ask myself what is this "Good-news"? Many people, I believe, read the New Testament, and are perplexed to know what the Gospel really is. I do not find it in the law of His kingdom, which He announces in the Sermon on the Mount. I am rather alarmed by its searching principles. But I do begin to catch some glimmering of the light in the words, "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets; I came not to destroy but to fulfil—for verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished". I remember how, in another place, He ventures to make this same claim for His own words: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not pass away". He speaks as one who embodies in Himself the righteousness of the law. The one lawgiver is, to Him, "My Father which is in heaven". "I came to fulfil". Through all the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, there is implied a fellowship like His own, with the Father who is in secret, or, "your Father which is in heaven".

I read on, and there is much about wonderful works, which are always done to help, not for mere display. I read of Scriptures to be fulfilled, which, I can understand, would be of special interest to His Jewish hearers. I find parables distinctly Jewish in their application, but, through all, there is "One speaking with authority and not as the scribes". I hear Him saying not only "A greater than Jonah" and a "Greater than Solomon", but "One greater than the temple is here". He claims "power on earth to forgive sins". And then I meet this saying, which is not surpassed in the depth of its spiritual meaning by anything in the Gospel of St. John: "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father, and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him". And then the gracious

words, which show to whom He would reveal the Father and in that fellowship the secret of rest—"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest"!

Reading on, I am struck with the suggestive difference between His sermon on the bread of life in the synagogue at Capernaum, and His talk to publicans and sinners later, as He went through the cities and villages teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem, and the last Passover. The sermon at Capernaum is a baffling enigma to His hearers, and undoubtedly He meant it to be so. He uses language entirely outside of their comprehension. He leaves them baffled and asking, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" But when He talks to publicans and sinners, while He is not unmindful of the Pharisees who stand by, criticising, He appeals to their hearts in parables which they could understand,—of the shepherd seeking the one sheep which was lost, of the woman seeking diligently until she finds the lost piece of silver, of the prodigal son, that pearl of parables, in which the Father-heart which Christ came to manifest is so beautifully pictured. He did not put Himself into it because He was the Word from the Father, the Revealer, making known the Father's heart to the sinner. In Him the Father was "going out to meet the prodigal while yet he was a great way off".

Matthew, Mark and Luke agree in their witness to the words which He spake at the last supper, "He took bread and blessed it and brake it; and He gave to the disciples and said, take, eat, this is My body: and He took a cup and gave thanks and gave to them, saying, drink ye all of it: for this is My blood of the covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins". John omits the institution, but the same conception appears in the sermon at Capernaum. "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me and I in Him".

The doing and the teaching of Jesus find their unity in His person. The teaching, apart from the revelation of Himself, is fragmentary and unsatisfying. All is clear, when we perceive the "I" in Whom all centers and from Whom the whole truth radiates. The good news of the kingdom is in Him. Law, temple, poetry and prophecy all converge in His person. He is the focal point of the historic past, and "I am the light of the world" is His own word to all the future. When we read that Jesus did and said many things which are not recorded, we wonder that in a life so important more was not told. This is explained when we realize that the supreme purpose of the Gospels is to manifest a person, and not merely to record His sayings and doings. He Himself said to the disciples, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now—howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth". "He shall glorify Me". He was to be in His own person, through death, the fuller revelation of the Gospel.

When we pass from the Synoptists to the Gospel of St. John the spirit and the life appear in all their beauty. "We behold His glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth". It is distinctively



the Gospel in a person. His own conception of God's purpose in Him is clearly revealed. It is expressed in so many forms that we are bewildered in our effort to collect the scattered rays into some point of light where we may intelligently define it. Sometimes He has in view the objects of the purpose, and we hear Him saying, "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary". "I am come to seek and to save that which was lost". "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance". "If any man thirst let Him come unto Me and drink". Sometimes His mind is full of the blessings consequent upon God's purpose in Him, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free". "I am the way and the truth and the life". "I am the resurrection and the life". "This is the will of My Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son and believeth on Him should have eternal life". "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me may not abide in the darkness".

Eternal life seems to have been the one inclusive end of the purpose; and that life, manifested in and to be realized through faith in the Son.

When, therefore, we ask, as we approach the cross, what the work was which the Father had given Him to accomplish on earth, I think we may without presumption sum up the answer in these statements:—

# I.

He was to show in Himself the creative idea of God in humanity. His being was to be a revelation. The purpose in Him went back before the law. He dared to say to the baffled, outraged Pharisees, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am". They accused Him of breaking the Sabbath law. He justified Himself in the unearthly way of putting Himself with the eternal, above the laws of time, and into the moral and merciful purpose of the Creator Himself, saying, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work".

It was in a like consciousness of being above time that He uttered the words of the high priestly prayer before His death: "I am no more in the world and these are in the world and I come to Thee. O righteous Father, the world knew Thee not, but I knew Thee; and these knew that Thou didst send Me; and I made known unto them Thy name and will make it known; that the love wherewith Thou lovedst Me may be in them and I in them". Who but a Jesus could have had this mind—a mind which soars to the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, and yet gathers humanity into a purpose which He here clearly reveals—the making known God's name—Father—the manifestation in His own person of the filial oneness (as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee) and a wholly new relation, and indeed creation to be completed in a fellowship with the Father and the Son so real that the "love wherewith Thou lovedst Me may be in them and I in them". Here is the whole divine idea. No mind of man could have invented it. In this spiritual oneness of the human spirit with the Father, through the Son, is the life eternal which He promised.

"This", He said, "is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent".

St. John in the proem of His Gospel formulates the creative purpose and carries us back to the Genesis. "In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God". He was in the world and the world was made by Him and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him to them gave He the right to become the children of God, even to them which believe on His name; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God".

## II.

*The Christ was to make the creative purpose which He incarnated realizable by man.* His obedience in the flesh was to be not a revelation only, but also a redemption. Sacrifice was present to Him from the beginning of His ministry. He was not like His disciples, "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken". He felt the shadow of the cross darkening upon Him in all the fierce antagonism of the world's moral evil, personified in the rulers of His own people. How fully He realized the meaning of this antagonism, His own pathetic words show: "I am come to send fire on the earth and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished". It was at a later period when He was moving for the last time toward Jerusalem that He taught His disciples the lesson of His great humility. "Even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many".

It is evident that God's purpose of realizing for humanity the life of Sonship with Himself, could, in our Lord's view, be accomplished only through His death. How through death He would accomplish it, His words in the high priestly prayer seem to show—"Father, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee. Even as Thou gavest Him authority over all flesh that whomsoever Thou hast given Him, to them He should give eternal life". He had said before that, "As the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself and He gave Him authority to execute judgment because He is the Son of Man". Clearly His idea is, that the life-giving authority committed to Him as the *Son of Man*, must be gained through and by His death as its inevitable condition. We have the same idea expressed in His words to the disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you".

He was to die, not merely to convict men of sin because they had killed the Prince of life and so to leave them more hopelessly remote from God. But He had put Himself into their case as the Son of Man, committed to bear all the consequences of their sin even to the shame and pain of being reckoned with the transgressors. He was empowered by the Father to act for man, judgment was placed in His hands, but there was no way by which

He could gain His spiritual throne as the rightful head of a new, redeemed humanity save the way of perfect subjection to the eternal righteousness as man and for man, which was the way of the cross. His purpose was to "save, not to destroy", but to gain this power, which the Father had committed to Him and which was the Father's purpose in Him, He could not save Himself.

*Why* it was necessary that He should bear our sins in His own body on the cross of a malefactor remains in all that He has revealed of His own consciousness a hidden mystery. But in some of His sayings there is a depth of insight which penetrates to the fundamental law of things. When they told Him that certain Greeks "would see Jesus", He answered saying,—“Verily, verily I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone, but if it die it beareth much fruit”. He had identified Himself with the temple, saying in the full fruition of the Boy's vision,—“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up”. Now He identifies Himself with the order of nature itself, in its deepest processes of evolution, and shows that sacrifice is a law of universal operation and only out of a “self-renouncing, self-sacrificing resignation of all, the benediction of a richer fruitfulness, of a glorified and multiplied existence, springs forth”.

He was the grain of wheat to be harrowed deeply into the earth. The harvest of that sowing would be bread for the world. Alford truly says that the symbolism here lies at the root of that in Chapter 6 of St. John where He represents Himself as the bread of life and interprets it to be “His flesh, which He will give for the life of the world”.

He had been born into the human conditions to reveal God's creative purpose, to show to men, in Himself the possibilities of Sonship with the Father, to prove the reality of God's loving purpose by bearing upon His own feeling their sorrows and sicknesses, by enduring their scorn with patience and making Himself the friend of publicans and sinners. But He was the grain of “wheat abiding alone by itself” while He remained on the surface history. If He continued so, He would simply be living out the life of His divine kind apart and unproductive. It was a law inherent in the constitution of all nature, that the life of God in Him, in order to multiply itself in harvest upon harvest of elect souls, should in its human form be planted into death.

He was thinking deeply into the same natural order, which was His Father's creative order, and as much His Father's will, as the “it is written” of Scripture, when He said to His sorrowing disciples—“a woman when she is in travail hath sorrow because her hour is come, but when she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish for the joy that a man is born into the world”. His sorrow and theirs were all one, but the reality was in His deeper pain, and only through the travail of His soul could the new man be born into the world.

That He did not fully understand the necessity which compelled the suffering of the cross, His own words show. Three times as He approached



the end, His troubled soul speaks. He had compared Himself to the grain of wheat, and then the black realization settling like a thunder-cloud upon His soul, He cries: "Now is My soul troubled and what shall I say—Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name". We are reminded again of the temptation in the wilderness. "Shall I pray as all My human dread of death impels Me to do, Father save Me?" The spirit triumphs in the brave determination, "Father, glorify Thy name!" What thoughts are stirred as we realize the consequences which seemed to depend upon His unflinching courage in that hour. He was so truly human in the struggle here as elsewhere that we cannot doubt the reality of it, but being human, how one almost trembles to think that the second Adam was here put upon His trial, and what if He had faltered and "saved Himself"?

He became obedient unto death, but the death of the cross was only the physical ending of His "*suffering* of death". That He made His "soul an offering for sin" in some mystery of mental anguish is apparent from the hour that He set His face toward Jerusalem. The sweat of blood in Gethsemane was the manifestation of an agony, greater than the pain of the actual cross. We cannot escape the conviction that the death which He died for us, was this mysterious death in His feeling, the "*suffering* of death", for He cried "*finished*" before He bowed His head and gave up the ghost.

He bowed His soul to the inexorable "*will*" in Gethsemane. "If this cup may not pass from Me except I drink it—Thy will be done". Deep in the moral order was the will that so it must be the "just for the unjust to bring us to God".

But He was comforted in all the agony that was gathering upon His soul by this thought, to which He gives expression three times in the course of His ministry: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself". The depth of insight which these words contain and which the event has proved, I may only suggest. The power of the cross in making men know themselves, melting them to contrition, speaking pardon to their convicted souls, honoring the righteousness which their own moral sense demands; satisfying the exactions of their consciences, making them more afraid of the love which forgives than of the wrath which threatens, bringing the Father-heart of the universe into a real sympathetic pulsing against our hearts, quickening new life, inspiring a passionate enthusiasm, glorifying the law of sacrifice as the way to life for all His followers—this is a theme which never grows old and which no eloquence can exhaust.

"Did e'er such love and sorrow meet?"

"Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

### III.

I need only state in words as few as possible that the Christ was *also* to initiate a society in and through which His word and work should be perpetuated and witnessed for in the visible world down to the end of time. This purpose appears in His choice of the twelve recorded by the synoptists and

assumed in the Gospel of John where they constantly appear. His sacerdotal prayer shows God's purpose in them: "As thou didst send Me into the world, even so sent I them into the world". Through them the Gospel must be preached in all the nations. He would give them the two simple sacraments—the outward and visible signs of the inward and spiritual grace—the initiatory baptism and the perpetual bond and sacrament of fellowship—the Lord's Supper. The law of their service should be this: "He that will be chief among you, let him be your servant".

Their unity, and, through their witness, the unity of all in all time who might "believe on Him through their word", should be in their Spiritual Head. "I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me".

As we follow Him to the cross, shrinking so humanly, and yet in His sensitive nature so superhumanly too, we are brought to words which seem to disclose something of His consciousness during the dark hours of suffering. "Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, 'I thirst' ". At every step of His approach to the cross, as indeed from His boyhood, doubtless, the Scriptures to be fulfilled had been in His mind. "The law was in His heart". He said to the disciples, you remember, at the Supper,—“the Son of Man goeth as it is written of Him”. When they went out into the Mount of Olives again, He said: "All ye shall be offended because of Me this night, for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad". When they came to take Him, He forbade resistance, and said: "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?" The dawning consciousness of the Boy in the Temple had grown to this, as the consummation on earth of the work His Father had given Him to do.

In all that tragedy He was not posing to fulfil the Scriptures, but sustained by the confidence that in all His suffering the Scriptures were being fulfilled in Him. It was His meat to do the Father's will, and that will was unrolled to Him in every experience even to the moment of darkest, deepest depression, when His heart was overwhelmed within Him; but He "could complain", in words which were pressed out of His soul's anguish: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" When the burning thirst consumed Him, He would naturally think in the very words of another of those psalmist experiences which had always been as parts of Himself. He remembered that this was the last drop in the cup. He could express His last human need, and so He gasped, "I thirst". They gave Him the vinegar to drink, and, with the physical strength revived for the moment, He cried with a loud voice,—“Finished”.

We cannot doubt that this consciousness which He would not stupify was in full vigor for that moment. The whole meaning of His past had been, we may suppose, in His thought during the long dark hours.

He had counted off the history He had been making by the clock of

time. He had spoken repeatedly of His times, His hours, His day. He had said in words best construed in their simplest meaning, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work". The night had come to Him and He was passing through it to the new morning of His glory.

*Finished therefore was His day's work in the body.* He had put Himself as the manifested God into human history, making a new day which Abraham rejoiced to see, and beginning a new creation in the "Word" made flesh, and saying to the moral chaos of a world, "Let light be".

*Finished was the Jewish age.* In another moment the veil of the Temple would be rent in twain. The scroll of law, psalm and prophecy would be closed and sealed with His blood. It was complete in Him even from the beginning, for the "seed of the woman had bruised the serpent's head".

*Finished was the manifestation in His person of God's creative idea in humanity.* It had been evolving from the beginning in and through all the Jewish history. He had caught the inspiration of the larger purpose, the poetry of all the past and made it a reality in Himself. He had revealed the new name "Father" in a real human relation made perfect by suffering, achieved by faith, patience and courage. God was no longer to be remote in the mocking beauty or the awful inexorableness of nature. He had been brought near. "So loving the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life".

*Finished was the full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice* for the sins of the whole world, in His perfect obedience even unto the death of the cross. Exacted in the eternal counsels of the divine righteousness, God was satisfied in Him, and He had won the right in righteousness to bring men out of the bondage of the old condemning law into the freedom of the Spirit, even the "glorious liberty of children of God".

*Finished was the founding* of His church in the hearts of His chosen ones. "Other foundation could no man lay than that which was now laid" in humanity. All that should be erected upon it in the history of organized Christianity should be abiding only as it is built upon the "foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone". St. Peter, distinguished by our Lord Himself as the confessor of a true faith, is entitled to tell us of our Lord's mind, and he has done it in the words: "Unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Because it is contained in Scripture,—Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious, and He that believeth on Him shall not be put to shame".

All this was finished for us through the splendid faith of a perfect Son of Man, who, in all and through all His work embodies the essential principle of the faith He requires of us as essential to salvation. "Whosoever will save His life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose His life for My sake, the same shall save it".



## \* THE RESURRECTION THE CROWNING FACT OF CHRISTIANITY.

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It will be recalled that Harnack began his celebrated lectures on the nature of Christianity by telling his students how important it was "to remind mankind again and again that a man of the name of Jesus Christ once stood in their midst".<sup>†</sup> May not we add that it is likewise immensely important to remind mankind again and again that one named Jesus Christ once died and rose again from the dead? For Strauss was not far wrong in thinking that the doctrine of the resurrection was "the centre of the centre, the real heart of Christianity";<sup>§</sup> at least this is true if the first Christians understood at all adequately the religion which they were set to preach. The two main topics of apostolic teaching were the death and the resurrection of Jesus. "We preach Christ crucified", was the declaration of Paul (1 Cor. 1: 23), but side by side with "the preaching of the cross" (1 Cor. 1: 18) was the preaching of the empty tomb. In the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13: 30-34), in that at Thessalonica (Acts 17: 3), before the philosophers of Athens (Acts 17: 18-31), and before Festus and Agrippa at Cæsarea (Acts 26: 23), to Jew and to Gentile, learned and ignorant, high and low, Paul made known his faith in the resurrection of Jesus, and put that fact in the foreground of his preaching.

In doing this, he was making no new Gospel. "I delivered unto you", he writes to the Corinthians, "that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried; and that He hath been raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15: 3, 4). Peter in the first Christian sermon ever preached, did not forget repeated emphasis on the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 2: 24-32); and in Solomon's Porch (Acts 3: 15), before the Jewish rulers (Acts 4: 10), and in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10: 40), he bore like testimony. He and Paul may fairly be taken as representing the drift of the public utterances of the apostles. "The Gospel of the kingdom", and "the word" which they proclaimed must have included a large and emphatic statement of these pivotal truths. The men who preached "the Lord Jesus" (Acts 11: 20) at Antioch with such remarkable results doubtless gave in their story as much prominence to the passion and the resurrection as the evangelists give. Indeed, when the apostles were assured that they were to be "witnesses" of Christ to the ends of the earth (Acts 1: 8), they obviously under-

\* Delivered at the Eighth Conference, held at All Saints Memorial Church, May 11, 1904.

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‡ *What is Christianity?* (Eng. trans.), p. 1.

§ Quoted by Mair, *Studies in the Christian Evidences*, p. 232.

stood that the chief fact (distinguishing fact from doctrine) to which they were to bear witness, was His resurrection from the dead (Acts 1 : 22) ; and we are shortly told that "with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 4 : 33).

The fact thus strongly and continually asserted occupied an eminent place in the minds of those who heard and believed. The recognition of the Lordship of Jesus, which Harnack calls one of the three characteristic features of the earliest Christian society, grew, as he says himself,\* from the acceptance of the death and resurrection of Christ as fundamental facts. To quote his own words, "The primitive community called Jesus its Lord because He had sacrificed His life for it, and because its members were convinced that He had been raised from the dead and was then sitting on the right hand of God".† By reason of its place, then, in the apostolic preaching and in the primitive Christian faith, the resurrection may justly be called the crowning fact of Christianity. In the matter of the death of Jesus, the interpretation—the doctrine—is the vital thing; while with the resurrection, the question of the fact itself is crucial.

But in the second place, the resurrection occupies its pre-eminent position in the Christian scheme, because as a fact it is most solidly attested. In the presentation of the evidence *John* does not greatly differ from the other Gospels. The purpose of them all, as some one has remarked, is not to give a history of the events of those eventful days, but to present proofs of a central fact. Naturally, John, as Dr. Sanday puts it, "selects what had taken the most personal hold on him".‡ His attention seems to be concentrated on a few individuals. He speaks of Mary Magdalene as if she went alone to the sepulchre; he adds to Luke's account of Peter's visit the statement that he himself was also there; and he gives details of both these incidents which are elsewhere lacking. He tells the story of Thomas' doubt and faith; he paints the picture of the seven by the Sea of Galilee, in which Peter and himself again are prominent. His characteristic thoughts and phrases appear, but his purpose is one with the other evangelists. John's story is in harmony with the declared object of his whole Gospel (John 20 : 31)—that of convincing his readers (1) of the historic truth of his statements, as in the case of Thomas, and (2) of their spiritual value—"that believing, ye may have life in His name"—as in the case of Peter. The historicity of the resurrection, then, is a thought which John shares and enforces with the rest.

The prevalence of the belief has been already suggested. The Gospels and the Epistles alike are stamped with it. And that it was the universal conviction among the Christians of the second and the first generations is confirmed, not, to be sure, by the observance of an Easter day, for though it is quite possible that this began in the time of the apostles, it can not be traced back farther than the second century with any certainty; but the

\* *Op. cit.*, p. 166.

† *Op. cit.*, p. 165.

‡ *Art. 'Jesus Christ in Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 2, p. 640. Cf. Westcott, Introduction to the Study of the Gospels, pp. 327-333.

inauguration of a weekly day of rejoicing on Sunday did take place at once, and can have no other explanation than the belief that on this day the Lord arose.\*

Strongest of all evidence, however, is the very existence of the Christian Church itself. The disappointed, timid and disheartened disciples of Good Friday were not material out of which to build a conquering church. Their sudden transition from sorrow to joy, from gloom to hope, from weakness to strength † can be explained only by some new faith which had been born in their hearts. What could have instilled into them such vigor and such confidence for their impossible task? Let Baur answer! "Nothing but the miracle of the resurrection [by which he evidently means a belief in such a miracle] could dispel the doubts which threatened to drive away the faith of the disciples after its object into the eternal night of death \* \* \* It was in this faith that Christianity acquired a firm basis for its historical development". ‡ Gibbon's five causes for the spread of Christianity are not enough.§ The "compact church organization" was good, but how did it come about that there was *any* organization? The "pure morals" and the "zeal of the early Christians" were good, but whence did they emerge into life? The "power of miracles" and the "belief in future rewards and punishments"—did they spring from a Christ who was dead, buried, lost? The apostles would have had no heart to preach a dead Christ and the world would never have received Him if they had. Without the transformation wrought by the belief in the resurrection of the Lord there would have been no preachers, no converts, no church. All admit today that the Christian Church was built upon a tomb believed to be empty—that the faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ created Christianity. It was more than a clever retort which Talleyrand is reported to have made to the benevolent rationalist who lamented to him the failure of his philanthropic propaganda. "What was he to do?" he asked. And the witty ex-bishop "politely condoled with him, feared it was a difficult task to found a new religion, more difficult than could be imagined, so difficult that he hardly knew what to advise! 'Still',—so he went on after a moment's reflection,—'there is one plan which you might at least try: I should recommend you to be crucified, and to rise again the third day' ". || It was in this way that the disciples believed Jesus Christ to have founded His religion, and it was this confidence which made them fearless, persistent and triumphant.

This belief needs to be made clear, for let it be remembered that it is upon this belief of the early Christians that we later Christians are dependent ¶ for our knowledge of the fact which underlies our faith. Harnack would have us hold "the Easter faith",—"the conviction that the crucified one gained a victory over death; that He who is the first-born among many

\* Art. *Lord's Day* in Hastings, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 140.

† See e. g., Mair, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

‡ *Church History*, Eng. trans., vol. 1, p. 42 (quoted by Stewart, *Handbook of Christian Evidences*, p. 50).

§ Cf. Schaaf, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 2, pp. 17-19.

|| *Natural Religion*, p. 181 (quoted by Mair, *op. cit.*, p. 231).

¶ Mair, *op. cit.*, p. 233.



brethren still lives",—even though "the Easter message" of the empty tomb and the appearance of a transfigured Lord may be taken from us \*. The great thing, he would say, is to know that Christ now lives—not to discover that He had a physical resurrection in the garden of Joseph. Now, it is certainly true that the knowledge which particularly concerns us is not that of the disposition of the Lord's body, but that of His continued life. But how are we to gain this knowledge? As Paul gained his, Harnack would seem to answer. His faith was based upon a personal revelation of the Son of God in him and to him. To rest our belief on anything less personal and direct than this, on the unstable foundation afforded by the stories of Paul and of the evangelists concerning the post-resurrection appearances of Christ, is to expose it to destruction at the hands of criticism. But, we ask once more, how are we to know that Christ is living, save through the medium of these very appearances? Our personal experience does not bring an original knowledge of that fact. However much this experience may at last cause the outward evidence to seem superfluous, "none the less", as Dr. Mason of Cambridge urges in his suggestive little book, † "the first step to this blessed assurance [for the disciples] was that they had seen, or believed that others had seen, the appearances of the risen Lord". And so it must be for us. Our faith, to be sane and sound, must be based upon no mere impression, but an established fact.‡ The vision of Paul, which caused him to declare at once that Jesus was the Son of God (Acts 9: 20), was of a quite exceptional character, never repeated thereafter, as Harnack admits.§ And yet, even this vision might not have been so plain had the report of the empty grave not come to Paul's previous knowledge, as Harnack himself will not deny. If our religion is to have both positiveness and reasonableness, the question becomes one of supreme importance—was the belief of the early Christians, which has come to us as the foundation of our own faith and experience, based on literal truth or on a delusion?

If we go into the details of the Gospels to answer that question, we seem to be in the midst of confusion. Ten discrepancies in these narratives of the resurrection have been dwelt on since the day of Celsus, so Dean Farrar tells us.|| We read the four accounts, and find it hard to obtain an exact story. How many women came to the tomb on that first Easter morning, one or two or three or more? In one party or two? At what hour precisely was the pious pilgrimage undertaken? Did the women behold one or two mysterious visitors, and within or without the tomb? Did Peter only, or Peter and John make the journey to the garden in answer to their summons? Was the first appearance of the risen Christ to Peter, or to Mary Magdalene, or to a group of women? Were the later appear-

\* *Op. cit.*, pp. 173, 174.

† *Christianity—What Is It?* p. 98.

‡ Cf. Dr. R. W. Dale, *The Living Christ and the Four Gospels*.

§ *Op. cit.*, p. 174.

|| *The Life of Christ*, vol. 2, p. 432.

ances chiefly in Galilee or around Jerusalem? \* Was the resurrection body a material body, as the eating and drinking would suggest, or a spiritual body? In no part are the Gospel records so variant as here in the story of the resurrection. Some of the difficulties can be reconciled by a fair and judicious study; possibly all could be accounted for by a fuller knowledge than is afforded us. But granting that some may remain, what facts are established by the testimony of these independent witnesses, who are not solicitous to display an exact harmony in minor details, so confident are they that they follow no cunningly devised fables? Why, obviously, the great facts, the essential facts—the third day,† the early hour, the women's visit, the lack of expectation in the minds of them or of the apostles, the empty tomb, the repeated appearances (nine or ten in all) of the Master Himself, the slow yielding to unquestionable evidence by those who at first disbelieved. To these momentous facts we have a united witness. How, then, otherwise than on the basis of truth, can these recorded experiences be explained? All who deny the fact of the resurrection—if they are to be reckoned serious students at all—hold to one of four theories: trance, legend, vision, or telegram.‡ (1) The trance theory, maintaining that Jesus did not really die, was killed by Strauss in an incisive passage, and need not be further referred to. (2) The legend theory, which claims that the belief in the resurrection was a later growth—the result of certain vivid and picturesque statements of the apostles' faith that Jesus was surely alive—is too evidently in contradiction to the records and the facts to need consideration. (3) The vision theory, which has found many adherents, was fathered by Renan, who made Mary Magdalene the giver to the world of a risen God, and by Strauss, who argued from the visionary character of Paul's sight of Jesus on the Damascus Road that the other post-resurrection appearances of Jesus were of the same sort, subjective and unreal. The objections to this theory of hallucination are briefly: (a) that there was not the *preparation* for such visions, the lapse of time or the state of expectancy which would make such visions natural; (b) that there was not the *duration* or form which would characterize such visions, the appearances being confined within six weeks, being few in number, indoors and out, to groups and even crowds of men, and, to a degree, as Keim has remarked, cool and unfamiliar; and (c) that there was not the *termination* which would naturally come to such visions, bringing on a reaction, leaving the subjects dull and apathetic, but that these limited, clear and tested appearances left the disciples resolute, purposeful, active. (4) The telegram theory, as Bruce has termed Keim's proposed solution, would make these visions still unreal, but objective—a kind of picture message from heaven to assure the disciples of their Lord's continued life and love. But this theory, while involving supernatural

\* Sanday, *op. cit.*, p. 640.

† Cf. Acts 10 : 40; 1 Cor. 15 : 4.

‡ On the general subject of these theories, see Mair, *op. cit.*, pp. 249-253; Stewart, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-55; Sanday, *op. cit.*, p. 641; Gilbert, *The Student's Life of Jesus*, pp. 401, 402; Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus, the Messiah*, vol. 2, pp. 625-679; Bruce, *Apologetics*, pp. 385-398; Barrows, *The Gospels Are True Histories*, pp. 103-146.

action as fully as the resurrection itself, labors under the great disadvantage of tampering with the Gospel narratives, and, in addition, of making the divine sender of these messages responsible for a sure misunderstanding on the part of the disciples and the consequent propagation of a false notion.

On the other hand, if the natural explanation of the early Christian faith be accepted, if Jesus in very truth did rise from the dead, how easily all things fit together! \* The character of Jesus, holy and unique, encourages us to believe of Him what we would not believe of others. † "It was not possible that *He* should be holden of death" (Acts 2:24). The prophecies of Jesus Himself, contained, as they are, not only in the triple tradition of the synoptists, ‡ but in isolated passages § and in the fourth Gospel as well (John 2:19-21), help us to believe the angelic word, "He is risen, even as He said" (Matt. 28:6). The testimony of the astounded guards, the sober character of the discrepant records, with their unconscious witness to the excitement and confusion of the time; || the belief of the disciples, after tests by eye and ear and hand as to the reality of the bodily presence of their Master—these unite to make plain that we are dealing with fact, not fiction. The adaptation of the Gospel of a risen Christ to humanity makes for the truth of the teaching, and the broad conviction that, whatever incidental errors might find their way into believers' minds, a the God of truth would not allow the religion of Jesus Christ to be founded on a delusion. Despite all the unwillingness to accept a miracle that may mark this age of science, we may heartily agree with a scientist like Prof. W. N. Rice in his conclusion: "When we consider that, but for the faith in the resurrection, Christianity would have been buried forever in the rock-hewn tomb in which the Master lay, and when we try to measure what Christianity, with its revelation of divine fatherhood and human brotherhood, and redemption from sin and life immortal, has been to mankind in these centuries of Christendom and Christian civilization, and what it promises to be in the glory of a millennial future, we cannot deem it 'a thing incredible' that, in that transcendent crisis of man's moral history, 'God should raise the dead' ". b

Yes, the interests to be served were vast. The resurrection is the crowning fact of Christianity not only because of its place in apostolic preaching and primitive Christian faith, not only because of the solidity of its evidence, but because of its relations to the doctrine and continued life of the church. c Four such relations may be specified as illustrate the outcome of the resurrection :

\* Mair, *op. cit.*, pp. 234-249.

† Barrows, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-67; Rice, *Christian Faith in an Age of Science*, pp. 357-359.

‡ Matt. 20: 19 with Mark 10: 34, and Luke 18: 33; Matt. 16:21 with Mark 8: 31 and Luke 9:22.

§ Matt. 12: 40; 27: 63; Matt. 17: 9 with Mark 9: 9; Matt. 17: 23 with Mark 9: 31; Matt. 26: 32 with

Mark 14: 28.

|| Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

a See e. g., McGiffert, *The Apostolic Age*, pp. 36-44.

b *Op. cit.*, p. 360.

c Cf. Sanday, *op. cit.*, p. 642. The results of a loss of belief in the resurrection are depicted in strong, but hardly too lurid, colors by Mr. Guy Thorne in his recent novel, "When It Was Dark".



(1) The relation of the resurrection to the miraculous. If this one miracle is once firmly established, the *a priori* improbability, of which Hume made so much, may be considered fairly met and mastered; the way is open for an impartial consideration of all alleged miracles on their individual evidence. Professor Rice, in the able and stimulating volume already quoted, goes so far as to say that "our chief reason for believing in any other miracle as historic, is that the strong evidence for the resurrection suffices to establish a probability that miracle is a part of the divine plan of revelation";\* and I believe he is right. Nay, more, it suggests in a wider way that the observed and experienced order of nature is not so limited by our knowledge of it, or so fixed and invariable by some eternal decree concerning it, that nothing unprecedented can be expected or believed. It makes one humble and teachable to remember that he has to do with the God who raised Jesus from the dead. Harnack may believe in an "inviolable" order of nature, and may insist that the feeling of freedom in God's world which the religious man enjoys—the certainty "that he is not shut up within a blind and brutal course of nature", but that he deals with a power who sometimes (as we see it) breaks through or arrests that order—that this feeling is but a fancy or a metaphor;† but if he accepted the resurrection as literal truth, he could strike out the word "inviolable". Historically, God has manifested Himself for special ends in miraculous works wrought through human hands; in present experience, God does manifest Himself in ways that are startling and incomprehensible to the little thoughts of the finite. Christianity is something more than the feeble human attempt to obey the teachings and to imitate the spirit of Jesus of Nazareth. If it means anything, it means "God with us". A Christianity with no surprises, no incredibilities, is a Christianity with no power. But the resurrection of Jesus Christ opens the door to faith in the supernatural in human affairs. Spiritual experiences are real, Providence and prayer are real, temporalities as well as spiritualities are in the hands of a Father, unto whom "in everything" our requests may be made known. The "order of nature" is His servant, not His master, and the universe shall be moulded to meet His children's need.

(2) Look, again, at the relation of the resurrection to the teaching of Jesus. It is asserted by many today that the only test of religion is experience—that a truth must become to us truth as it shines in its own inherent light, that it must commend itself in the fashion of an axiom, so as to be recognized when seen. By none has this teaching been more strongly and persuasively set forth than by the late Auguste Sabatier, in his monumental work, "Religions of Authority", only recently translated into English. He will have nothing of a religion based on external authority, authenticated by miracle and the like. The appeal must be the direct appeal of the Spirit of God to the spirit of man. Jesus, he says, brought in no new religious ideas. His one secret was in His consciousness of Sonship in the Father, and His

\* *Op. cit.*, p. 352.

† *Op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.

one work was to communicate this consciousness to His followers. The historical element, as concerns both the works and the words of Jesus, is depreciated, as it was earlier by, for example, Professor T. H. Green, of Oxford. The ideas of God and man and their relations which we Christians have, are, so this school contends, "self-evidencing and eternal, and possess an inherent truth and vitality entirely independent of the accidental vehicle through which they were introduced into the consciousness of mankind". Such teachers, we gladly admit, have a spiritual message which is wholesome for our age, even in its defects; but such teachers, we must urge, do not know men as Jesus Christ knew them. He also laid stress upon the direct appeal to the human heart—"Believe me", He cries, "that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me"—as if He would ask, "Can you not see it? Do you not feel it to be so?" And yet He recognized that men could not all and everywhere and always rise by pure hearts and clear eyes to see the truth immediately as it was in Him. And He adds a second reason—"Or else believe Me for the very works' sake" (John 14 : 11). He does not disdain the testimony of external signs and witnesses. To the multitude of the ignorant and the sinful the pure message needs to be authenticated by the works—stamped with the authority of the Teacher sent from God. And many profess, with Nicodemus, "We know that Thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these signs that Thou doest, except God be with him" (John 3 : 2). The miraculous accompaniments of the life of Jesus may prepare the way for His message, and then add impressiveness to it. This has been well put by Professor Rice, whose words I must once more quote: "The evidence of miracle is still valid and still needed. We stand in an upper room in Jerusalem, and listen to the words with which the young Prophet of Galilee comforted His disciples on the last night of His life: 'Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also'. Beautiful words, in their sweet simplicity, and in their accord with our highest moral sentiment, our holiest aspirations. Words so beautiful ought to be true. But are they the words of one who speaks with authority and whose word can be trusted, or are they only the sweet dreams of a spirit too pure and gentle for this hard, rough world? To us, as to those disciples who heard Him, the evidence of the authority of His teaching is found in the fact of His resurrection".\*

(3) Consider, also, the relation of the resurrection to the question of the person of Jesus Christ. Whether the secret of that personality be conceived as residing in the filial consciousness of Jesus, or in His metaphysical relation to the Father, the full declaration of the personality awaited this supreme event in His history. He was "declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1 : 4). The intimations of His Messiahship had been repeatedly given, and statements had been made bearing

\* *Op. cit.*, p. 384.

upon the deeper mysteries of His nature. But the truth did not yet become plain to His disciples. "The conviction was gradually formed", writes Dr. Mason,\* "until at last, after the resurrection, the disciple who had, perhaps, been slowest to believe the Easter tidings, because he felt more than others the stupendous nature of the Easter belief which he instinctively felt must lie behind it, gave expression to that which was thenceforth the belief of Christendom. 'My Lord', he said—as he had doubtless said many times before—recognizing the identity of the risen Jesus; and then he sprang to the height of that confession which human lips had never as yet uttered, although every disciple's heart had silently been ripening to utter it—the confession that his Lord was his God". It was only the risen Lord whom the disciples knew as divine. It was Christ with the majesty of the opened tomb upon Him who commanded the reverential awe of the apostles, so that He who for three years had been the object of love now became also the object of worship. It was after the resurrection and because of the resurrection that, to borrow Dr. Sanday's words, not here and there, one and another, "but the whole Christian Church passed over at once to the fixed belief that He was God".

(4) Finally, let not the relation of the resurrection to the saving work, of Jesus be forgotten. Without the death of Jesus there is no Gospel; without His resurrection there is no assurance of the Gospel's truth. The resurrection put the seal on the work of Jesus, as well as on His person. His death and resurrection were both "according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:7), that is, they had a divine meaning, a setting in a long providential order.† They completed and authenticated the plan of redemption. The work of Jesus was now not only humanly finished, but divinely accepted. The "martyr" became evidently a Saviour.

The question of the victory of goodness was settled once for all. Jesus had bidden the disciples "be of good cheer", for He had "overcome the world" (John 16:33). But hard upon the words followed the awful death, the seeming failure and defeat. Sadly they confessed to a hope for God's kingdom which had died and been buried with their Master (Luke 24:21). Utter purity had seemed to be helpless in a world of sin, and righteousness, in its one supreme manifestation, to be impotent. But then comes a change. Jesus Christ is to be "placarded before the eyes" of men (Gal. 3:1), not simply as the crucified, not as the dead leader of a lost cause, but as a living king under whose feet one more enemy—the last and greatest—has been trampled (1 Cor. 15:26; 2 Tim. 1:10). His crucifixion has seemed to be a token of weakness; His living again is a token of God's might (2 Cor. 13:4). There is a power behind and in His resurrection (Phil. 3:10), a "mighty power" shown in that working "which God wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead" (Eph. 1:20)—a power sufficient to every need of the great enterprise which is now begun. "All power is given unto Me", cries the risen Lord, "go ye, therefore" (Matt. 28:18, 19).

\* *Op. cit.*, p. 106.

† *Mason, op. cit.*, p. 84.



Nothing is now too good to be believed, nothing too great to be attempted. Righteousness is vindicated as the mastering force of the universe. The death of Jesus is seen to be only an example under the general rule of "dying to live". Obstacles can be despised, enemies loved, death itself faced without terror, for Jesus Christ has confronted and conquered all. To the disheartened soldier comes the glad tidings that his captain has not quit the field. In the exultant words of another, "All the wealth of His deep interest, His spacious human sympathy, His rich tenderness of disposition, His inspiring hopefulness, His invincible energy, and the strength of His redemptive purpose, have been untouched by the desolating hand of death. There they are just behind the veil, which half conceals and half reveals them. The world's greatest asset is still valid. The one Spirit whom failure could not daunt nor despondency enervate is still there. The one Being whose beauty could subdue the worst, whose love could melt the hardest into contrite penitence, and who held the key to every man's heart, is alive, interested, active, sympathetic. That surely is the spring of our largest hope, the root of our assured confidence, the ground of our invincible optimism". He was "declared to be the Son of God *with power* by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4).

But this power of God, exerted in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, is to be the pledge not only of the victory of the kingdom, but of the transformation of the individual believer. The kingdom is to spread within as well as without. Jesus "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). So close is the truth of the resurrection to the spiritual life that he who accepts *with his heart* the resurrection of Jesus (with all that that implies of Saviourhood and Lordship) shall be saved (Rom. 10:9; Col. 2:12). The resurrection of Jesus was more than a figure of the rising from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; it was also a means to this resurrection of the believer by his mystical union with the risen Christ (Rom. 6:4-10). It was a Gospel of the death and resurrection of Jesus by which the Corinthians were saved (1 Cor. 15:1-4), and it will be such a Gospel that will in every age have power enough to transform lives, and vitality enough to transmit itself to a generation yet to come. "The God of Peace" it is, "that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus", who will "make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight" (Heb. 13:20, 21).

The resurrection of Jesus, moreover, is a pledge of the completion of His work of grace by the coronation of the spiritual life with the final gift of immortality. Jesus is but "the first-fruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:20). "Because I live, ye shall live also" is His message to His own.\* The thought of the future was purified and elevated above the material plane by the exhibition of that resurrection body with its strange pneumatic qualities, and the obvious suggestion that the resurrection life was no return to former condition, as the Jews had naturally thought, but the beginning of a new and glorified life.† But more than this, the resurrection

\* Cf. 1. Thess. 4:14; 1 Cor. 6:14; 2 Cor. 4:14.

† Mason, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-98. Gilbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 400 ff.

of Jesus has given to the world its clearest assurance of any life beyond the grave. The Gospel through which "life and immortality were brought to light" (2 Tim. 1:10) was the Gospel of the empty grave. Even Harnack says, in words that glow with feeling: "Whatever may have happened at the grave, and in the matter of the appearances, one thing is certain: *This grave was the birthplace of the indestructible belief that death is vanquished and there is a life eternal.* It is useless to cite Plato; it is useless to point to the Persian religion, and the ideas and literature of later Judaism. All that would have perished, and has perished, but the certainty of the resurrection and of a life eternal which is bound up with the grave in Joseph's garden has not perished, and on the conviction that *Jesus lives* we still base the hopes of citizenship in an eternal city which make our earthly life worth living and tolerable".\* In the confidence that He has gone to prepare a place, we may still repeat the unwavering words of Browning:

"O Saul, it shall be  
A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me  
Thou shalt love and be loved by forever; a Hand like this hand  
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the Christ stand!"†

The Christianity that in history has proved a conquering power lies not merely in the things which Jesus said, as Harnack would have us believe; not merely in the things which Jesus felt as a Son of God, as Sabatier would teach us; but in what He said and felt and was and did; and these all find their climax and their crown in His resurrection from the dead. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. 1:3).

"One thing  
Remained, however,—one that tasked  
My soul to answer; and I asked  
Fairly and frankly, what might be  
That History, that Faith, to *me*?"‡

"In the biography of Dr. Dale there is the record of an experience which is one of the great things in our modern Christian life. He was writing an Easter sermon, and when half way through the thought of the risen Lord broke in upon him as it had never done before. 'Christ is alive', I said to myself; 'alive', and then I paused; 'alive', and then I paused again; 'alive! Can that really be true? Living as really as I myself am?' I got up and walked about, repeating, 'Christ is living, Christ is living!' At first it seemed strange and hardly true, but at last it came upon me as a burst of sudden glory; yes, Christ is living. It was to me a new discovery. I thought that all along I had believed it, but not until that moment did I feel sure about it. I then said, 'My people shall know it; I shall preach about it again and again, until they believe it as I do now'".

\* *Op. cit.*, p. 175.

† *Saul*, 18.

‡ Browning, *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*, 14.

The need of the hour is to make the resurrection not simply a historical fact, accepted by the intellect as proved, but a real truth in the heart and conscience, manifested in a life surrendered to the dominion of a risen Lord and spent in the fellowship of a living Friend.



## \* THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

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There has been some difference of opinion among learned men as to the writer of this chapter, the time of its composition and its relation to the preceding portion of the Gospel. A study of the chapter will show that it constitutes an organic part of the Gospel, that it is the appropriate epilogue demanded by the prologue, if these terms may be used, and that it has all the peculiar characteristics of the Gospel. The external evidence against it is weak, and the internal evidence decisive in its favor.

The Gospel of John is the Gospel of the manifestation of Christ. This chapter contains an account of His final manifestation to His disciples. It is the third manifestation (not appearance) after His resurrection. It differs from the two preceding, first, in that it is not made to the assembled disciples, but to a select number—seven; second, that it is a manifestation by a miracle. The miracles in this Gospel differ in several respects from those recorded by the Synoptists. They are much fewer in number, only eight; with the single exception of the court officer's child, they are self moved, not demanding faith on the part of the recipient, nor wrought primarily for the recipient's benefit. There is no prohibition of publicity; on the contrary, they are signs, and as such, are wrought for the express purpose of being known. As the Gospel of John is the Gospel of the future, the miracles are all promises and prophecies. They are manifestations of His glory, of the glory that is to be revealed, of which His church is to be partaker (1 Peter 5: 1, 4, 10).

The miracle with which this chapter opens is a manifestation of the glory that shall be revealed. Compare it with a similar miracle wrought at the beginning of the church's work. You will find the account in the fifth chapter of the Gospel according to Luke. It is the prophecy of the work of the church during this age. Christ is in the boat; a great number of all kinds of fishes are caught; the products of the cast are taken into the boat, which begins to sink; the church is imperiled by its very success. These fishes are good and bad; the separation awaits the time when the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just. In the miracle we are studying, the Lord is on the shore; the fishes are drawn, not into the boat, but to the land; they are not an unknown multitude, of unknown quality, good and bad; they are all great fishes the exact number of which is known, a hundred and fifty and three. It is the manifestation of the

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\* Delivered at the Seventh Conference, held at the Central Congregational Church, April 13, 1904.

glory of that morning when the night shall have been spent and the long looked-for day has come; when Christ appears to consummate salvation; when the church, holy and without blemish, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, takes her place as Christ's bride. At the marriage feast, there is manifested that peculiar characteristic of the work of salvation, the blessed union of the human and divine, the joint results of those who have been workers together with God and of Him who has been working in them of His good pleasure. "As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon and bread, and the Lord said to them, bring of the fish which ye have now caught". So may God grant that He speak to us.

But if He is so to speak to His church, there must be time for the church both to make herself ready for the marriage supper of the Lamb, and time to provide for that portion of the feast which she is to furnish. The marriage feast was not possible on the day of Pentecost; it could not come in the first century; the delay of our Lord's coming, as Peter tells us, is for salvation (2 Peter 3: 15). There must be long years of faith and hope and prayer and work during which the church must fit itself and be fitted for its high estate, and its members be gathered in from the ranks of the world. This long time is a season, not of idle expectation, gazing up into heaven, but of work and warfare and suffering for Christ, of laying hold of that for which the church was laid hold of by Jesus Christ, a time in which every building, fitly framed together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, all Christians being builded together into a habitation of God through the Spirit.

To this end Christ sanctifies Himself. He continually works in His people by the washing of regeneration and by their daily renewal by the Holy Spirit. The end at which He is aiming can not be attained without the constant co-operation of the church itself. This principle holds in every form of human attainment. No money, care, or effort can educate a boy without the boy's own earnest endeavor. To the church Christ gives the commission with which the Gospel according to John closes, just as the first Gospel closes with the other great commission to disciple all the nations. But, you say, Christ is here addressing Peter. Yes, but not to Peter as an individual were the three directions which we are about to study given any more than the commission in Matthew is given to the eleven. The apostles did not go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; on the contrary, when the first persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, all were dispersed, except the apostles.

A careful perusal of the Gospels will show you that wherever Christ segregates the apostles, or a portion of them, and gives them instruction, He always addresses them as the prospective church, and the directions He gives cover the whole dispensation. The threefold trust committed to Peter when they had breakfasted is no more committed to him as an individual than were the keys of the kingdom as related in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew. The keys of the kingdom were committed to the church which

still holds them; no man enters the kingdom except through the instrumentality of the church. Peter was chosen by Christ to be the representative and mouth-piece of the twelve apostles who stood before him as the prospective church.

In the words addressed by Christ to Peter as the representative of the church there are a threefold question, a threefold answer, and a consequent threefold charge.

Why is this question asked, and why is it asked three times?

Because the one fundamental, essential, indispensable qualification for those to whom the church is to be intrusted is love to Christ. The charge is the committal of love, by love, to love.

The first question differs from the other two. "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these?" Scholars tell us that "so far as grammar goes", this may mean either "Lovest thou Me more than the other disciples love Me?" or, "Lovest thou Me more than all thy earthly possessions, all thy earthly loves?" Grammar may not decide, but something higher than grammar does. Can any father imagine himself asking his child, "Do you love me more than your brothers and sisters do?" Would any father, if such a question were put, desire a child to say "yes"? Is a candidate for the ministry ever asked whether he loves Christ more than his brethren in the ministry do? If he were to answer in the affirmative, he would surely show his unfitness for the office to which he aspires. No, the question of Christ is, "Do you love Me so much that you will forsake all and follow Me"? This question Peter could answer with all his heart, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee".

Three times is this question repeated. I am sorry to say that nearly all the commentators whom I have consulted agree that Christ intends in this way to remind Peter of his threefold denial. It is presumption in me to differ with such a body of learned men, yet I confess that I can not adopt their opinion. I can not believe that this question, never a proper one except from the lips of love, was repeated three times by Christ in order to mortify and humiliate Peter by reminding him of the one awful sin of his life. It seems to me inconsistent with the nature of Christ, with the methods of God, and with all the dealings of Christ with Peter before and after his denial.

And I ask you, do you believe it? If you had been in Christ's place at this time, if you had a friend to whom you were about to entrust those whom you loved more than life; if this friend under the pressure of temptation in the darkest hour the world ever saw, an hour which above all others was the hour and power of darkness, had denied that he knew you, if your one prayer for that friend in view of that hour had been that his faith in you might not fail, and that prayer had been answered, so that one look from you had broken his heart and he had hastened to your side, would you, in the presence of his and your friends as you were about to confer on him the greatest possible mark of your love and confidence, would you remind him of his fault? You would not allow him to allude to it. You would



despise yourself if at such a time you would thus humiliate him. All that to you is as though it had never been.

Beloved, do you know how God forgives?

Some time ago, I had a grandchild spending a year in my family. One day, little Grace came to the daughter who had the special oversight of her, with a request for some favor. "No" was the reply, "you have been a naughty girl and you can not have it".

She came to her the next week and said, "Aunt, I have been a good girl now. May I not do that?"

"Yes, you may, but you were not a good girl last week".

"Oh, aunt Dora, you are not a bit like God. When God forgives any one, He does not keep flinging it up to him afterwards". Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God ordains praise.

Oh, beloved, do you know how God forgives? Hear Him: "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions". You have seen a dark cloud on the face of the sky with its clearly defined outlines; you turn away, think of something else, look back again and the cloud has disappeared. There is no scar on the fair face of the heavens; no man can ever tell where it has been or trace its outline; it has vanished. You have stood on the deck of a steamer and cast something into the ocean. The waters close over it. It has left no seam on the bosom of the waters; no eye will ever again see it. Listen, "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea". You have read that wonderful prayer recorded in the fifty-first Psalm: "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow". I have ridden through the forest on a bright winter morning after a snowstorm, and as I admired the beauty of the snow glittering in the sunlight, I have said, "Snow, thou art dazzlingly white, but I know something whiter; my soul washed in the blood of Jesus".

Are you still unconvinced? Look at the way in which our Lord dealt with Peter before and after his denial. At the last supper, Christ says, "Simon, Simon, Satan has desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not". Mark the "you" and the "thee"; mark also, that He does not pray that Peter may be kept from the commission of the sin, but that after the sin his faith may not fail. What place that sin had in the great work wrought on Calvary we can only conjecture. At any rate, the question which God asks the sinner is not, "What have you done?" but, "What will you now do?" The decisive question with each one of us will be, not "Did you sin?" but, "What did you do after you sinned?" Those of us who have had experience in dealings with our brethren who look back on a life spent in the professed service of God with such bitter condemnation as is sometimes felt, know what it is to pray and exhort "that thy faith fail not". This made the difference between Peter and Judas. Both had fearfully sinned. Both repented. The repentance of Judas, tried by the best human standards was unexceptionable. He confessed to his partners in sin the awful crime he had committed. He would not retain the wages of his wrong doing, but flung the pieces of silver down

on the pavement. He had no faith that God would forgive him and so he could not forgive himself. You know the result.

How does Christ treat Peter before and after his denial? In Matthew, as we have seen, He prays that his faith may not fail. In Mark, Christ's first message to His disciples is, "Go tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you to Galilee"; in Luke, "The Lord has risen indeed and has appeared unto Simon". Paul tells us that "He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve".

It is very strange when one sees how Christ dealt with Peter, what special affection He lavished upon him, with what great interests He entrusted him, that public speakers so often seem incapable of pronouncing his name without prefixing some opprobrious epithet. He is characterized as "impetuous Peter", "fickle Peter", and I know not what. Why not, once in a while, follow the example of Him who said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee, but My Father, who is in heaven". I wish I could once hear from the pulpit, "Blessed Peter".

The reply of Peter to the inquiry of Christ is the best possible; "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee". Christ's reply is His first charge to Peter, "Feed My lambs". What words could be more welcome to Peter's ears. Love's one wish is to be asked to do something for the person loved. What words could be sweeter than those which Christ here speaks? It would be difficult to imagine another sentence of the same length that would convey more of the heart of Christ, of His feeling toward Peter, of the place which those for whom He is providing hold in His affections, "My lambs". I commend these words as themes of meditation to those of you whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditate in that law day and night.

The word "feed" in this charge is by no means to be restricted to instruction. That the young Christian needs instruction goes without saying. But the food which a child eats may be of the best, and yet the child become a source of grief and shame. The moral atmosphere which he breathes, the influences which surround him, the example which is continually before him, these are the things which determine whether he is to break his parents' heart or be a comfort, an honor and a blessing. Character is determined by the family nurture and training. Wherever there is a Samuel ministering before the Lord, there is always a Hannah. Even our Lord Himself, if He is to come into the world as a child can not come until there has been time to produce a father, a righteous man, and above all, a mother, blessed of the Lord, who could sing to Him those songs which have been the canticles of the church in all ages. The character of the church in which the young Christian is nurtured determines his character and destiny. If he receive the right influence, example, instruction, he will be, in his sphere, what the church is, the light of the world.

It is very important to remember that Peter is not addressed here as an individual, not as a minister, but as the representative of the church. This

direction of our Lord, "Feed My lambs", is given to the church; to all in her who in their various relations and with their various gifts and graces have to do with shaping in any way the character and conduct of the young members. These words are as binding on parents, Sunday school teachers, experienced and influential members of the church, on all who can be of service to the young Christian.

"He saith to him the second time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me? He saith to Him, yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him, Shepherd My sheep".

The verb and the noun are both changed. Lambs have become sheep, the persons for whom Christ is making provision are no longer children under the constant care of those who love them and watch over them; they are out in the world, bearing the burden and heat of the day, contending against wickedness in the church and the world, exposed to all the influences which Satan can bring to bear upon them, breathing the atmosphere of a world at enmity with God, walking necessarily in its soiling paths, needing—Oh, how much!—shepherding. In this Gospel of John you will notice that the favorite terms which Christ uses to express the relation between Himself and His church are "shepherd" and "sheep". Why is this? A sheep is notoriously the most irrational, if I may be pardoned for the word, the "dumbest" of animals. All other animals may be trained; I have heard even of trained fleas, but who ever heard of a trained sheep? If a sheep wander from the fold, which it is certain to do if left to itself, it does not know enough to return; unless the shepherd seek it, it will perish; it has no means of defence; it is the most helpless, as it is the most foolish of animals. The only thing that can be said of it, and, blessed be God, the only thing that need be said of it to make it very dear to the heart of Christ is, "They hear the shepherd's voice and they follow him".

The office of shepherd, outside the Bible, carries with it no idea of honor or comfort. The shepherd's duties are unending. Other men, however arduous their duties, have their hours of rest. The darkness summons them to the place to which they hasten where they sit in quiet and comfort with those they love, and then lie down for the sleep so sweet to the laboring man. But the duties of the shepherd are unending. The darkness summons him to more vigilant watch against the wild beast prowling around the sheepfold and the robber watching his opportunity to steal and kill and destroy. Nay, the good shepherd must give his life for the sheep. The man who will not do this is a hireling and not a shepherd. Can you wonder that in this Gospel of love the favorite terms of Christ are shepherd and sheep? I can not better describe the manner in which the charge of Christ is to be obeyed than by repeating the words which are constantly in the mouth of Paul as he urges upon those to whom he writes the duty of comforting, (in the old sense of the English word—strengthening), encouraging, rebuking, reproving, exhorting. What can I do better than to quote the words in which Paul enforces his idea of the duties of a shepherd in his solemn parting address to the elders at Ephesus?—"Take heed to yourselves



and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit appointed you overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood; I know that after my departure grievous wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among yourselves will men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after them. Wherefore watch, remembering that for the space of three years, night and day, I ceased not to admonish every one with tears”.

Guarding the flock is not the only, indeed not the chief, duty of the shepherd. He must lead his flock in green pastures that all their spiritual wants be met. This, it is needless to say, can be done only by Christ filling the soul. His flesh is meat, indeed, and His blood is drink, indeed. He satisfies all the instincts of the renewed nature.

The guide of the flock must so love Christ that those to whom he preaches must have Christ fill their hearts. This can be accomplished only by a loving heart presenting the object of love. Doctrine and dogma and theory and philosophy and argument, however correct, will not convince the opponent or meet the necessities of the inquirer or the indifferent. Christ must be preached in love, by love. The one question comes home again to any wishing a commission from Christ, “Lovest thou Me?”

This is the reason why Christ asks this question three times. It is to emphasize the all-abiding necessity of this one qualification for Christian service, a necessity essential in every form of service to every age and condition. Peter was grieved at the threefold repetition of the inquiry, naturally grieved, because he did not understand the great compass of the words addressed to him. He did not dream that these questions and charges stretched over centuries, that they would be the guide of the church for all coming time.

One class of Christ's sheep yet remains. Our Lord has given special directions for the young and for the fullgrown; there is a class for which in our ordinary church life no special provision is made. We take care for the young, the various organizations formed for their benefit are before us continually. Next to them our sermons, our prayers, our efforts are inspired by the men and women in active life. When a pastor is to be chosen, I need not repeat the inquiry which is sure to be heard. Yet the Bible lays great stress on the duty which is owed to the aged, inculcates for them great respect, and breathes its blessing on those who love and care for them. One may be sure that in our Lord's provision for His church the aged will not be neglected.

“He saith to him the third time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, Lovest thou Me? He said to Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith to him, Feed My sheep”.

Again the verb and the noun are changed. The verb is the same that is used in connection with the lambs, for the duty is very much the same; the noun, scholars tell us, is the diminutive of the noun translated sheep, in v. 16, a very appropriate designation for the aged Christian. For, in many

respects, and those most important ones, old age must, in the vast majority of cases, be a second childhood. No matter by what loving and considerate care surrounded, no matter how carefully the shield is thrown around the aged Christian, with what tender anxiety watched, the old man can not but be conscious of the decay of his physical strength, and, far worse than that, of his mental faculties. No gratitude to his heavenly Father for a sweet and peaceful and sunny old age, devoid of care, his wants all supplied, can blind him to the fact that his day of active service for his Lord and his brethren is passed, that all those with whom he once was in the thickest of the fight have passed away, and in the midst of friends who could not be kinder he is alone in the world. The cup is put to his lips by the hand he loves most and best; he receives it with a gratitude for the past and present which can not be expressed in words. But all this, most precious as it is, can not change the ingredients of the cup. And as, under the pressure of accumulating years, possibly of sorrow and misfortune, the thoughts of the aged Christian concentrate in their own grief, he becomes suspicious, querulous, and makes exorbitant demands on those who have to do with him.

But there are others whose face, on which divine grace has been working these many years, is an inspiration to the minister as he looks over his congregation, or enters the room where the aged saint is sitting with the Bible before him. There is no pleasanter part of a minister's duty than to feed Christ's aged sheep. He can minister to their faith and hope, he can open to them that word which they love so well, he can give them the cup of cold water which is to them so welcome, and he finds oftentimes that in attempting to bring courage and strength he is the one who has been encouraged and strengthened. He came to impart a blessing; he goes away feeling that his own soul has tasted of the goodness of God in a way entirely unanticipated. In every case love will show mercy with cheerfulness, will bear another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. The aged Christian is one of Christ's sheep, and the greater the need the more will love desire to perform its work, and the more will that love find in doing its work its prized reward. Love never faileth.

How well Peter understood the directions of Christ, and how faithfully he followed them may be seen from his two Epistles. The first is addressed exclusively to babes in Christ. They are described as newborn, and are bidden to desire the pure milk of the word that they may grow thereby. The duties inculcated in the first Epistle are all passive virtues—obedience, submission, patience under unjust censure, subjection to rulers, husbands, masters, to the elder, to one another, and to be clothed with humility. The second Epistle is addressed entirely to mature Christians, to those who have received the great promised blessings, who have become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through desire. They are bidden to develop a full, round-sided, symmetrical, perfect character, and to be ready for an abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom. Those critics who have doubted the authenticity of the second Epistle because of the difference from the first, will find their difficulties

removed if they study the two Epistles in the light of Christ's charge to Peter.

The wisdom which has been manifest in the words of Christ to Peter thus far, will shape the manner of their fulfilment. Peter's life will be what the life of every faithful Christian is, a plan of God. The young minister looks upon the world and studies his own field of labor. He asks, "Where can I best glorify God? Shall I go to an eastern or a western field in my own country, or shall I seek a foreign missionary's work?" At first he chooses apparently according to his own convictions and wishes. But as he grows in years, more and more is he conscious that his place of labor is not determined by his own will. Another girds him and carries where he did not wish to go. As in our families when our children are learning to walk, we care not where they turn their steps. From chair to chair we watch their little footsteps, and are pleased with their efforts to use their new found powers, but when they are older they walk in ways not of their own choosing, often sorely against their own inclinations, but in ways which show the wisdom of their parents, ways which are indispensable to the accomplishment of the purposes which the parent has in view. And in this the Christian rejoices. It is his chief joy that in the midst of all his toil and perplexities and difficulties he can devoutly say, "I am here not by my own choice or desire or plan; I am here because God put me here, and whatever is the outcome I will be glad and grateful".

As we look at the response of Christ to Peter's answer to the question, "Lovest thou Me?" can we conceive of anything more blessedly welcome? "Peter, do you love Me? Then you may work for Me. Peter, do you love Me? Then you may live for Me. Peter, do you love Me? Then you may die for Me". Heaven can provide no honor more to be coveted by the Christian than these three things.

In the great crises in the foundation and spread of Christianity, Peter and John are associated. They are sent together to make preparations for the last Passover. When Mary brings the news of the deserted tomb, they run together to the sepulchre; Peter and John go together to the temple to work the first Christian miracle; both are imprisoned and brought before the Sanhedrin in consequence; both reply to the accusation; when Samaria received the word of God, Peter and John are sent to lay hands on the new converts and impart to them the Holy Spirit. Most naturally Peter, having received his commission, asks what part in the development of Christianity is John to have. It would have been most unbrotherly in him not to show this interest in his brother. Christ's reply is not a rebuke. He would not chide Peter for a manifestation of a love which He had Himself created. The phrase, "What is that to thee?" and similar ones elsewhere, convey no censure; they declare the clear distinctness of two spheres of office or work. Christ says, "If the manifestation of Me through John abides till I come, that does not affect your work".

In this light read the respective Epistles of Peter and John. Compare or contrast them. Peter addresses strangers and sojourners. There is



nothing in his Epistles which can and is not now fully realized. Almost every sentence in John's Epistles is an echo of his words, "Beloved, now are we the children of God, but it is not yet manifested what we shall be. We know that if He be manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is".

"And there are also many things which Jesus did; the which if they should be written every one I suppose the world itself would not contain the books that should be written". To which we will all say, "Amen". For when one is reading the Gospel and Epistles of John he seems to himself like a man in whose hands are the lower links of a chain of gold let down from the throne of God. He values as beyond price what he sees, but he is conscious that there is infinite wealth beyond his vision. May that untold treasure one day be ours.

\* THE IMPORT OF ST. JOHN 21:15-17.

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It seems to me to be probable that the Gospel usually attributed to the Apostle John close with the twentieth chapter. Its concluding sentences are,—“Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His name”. Here the author refers to certain events which he has not incorporated in his writing; calls what he has written “this book”, and specifically states the object which he had in view in writing it. If there were not another chapter, every intelligent reader would regard this as a very natural and fitting close to all that goes before in this Gospel.

Still, what is presented in the opening sentences of the twenty-first chapter is very closely and vitally linked with the events before related: “After these things Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias”. It is not, therefore, surprising that some thoughtful interpreters should conclude, that, notwithstanding the last words of the preceding chapter seem to note a formal close of the Gospel, it did not end there, but instead, the author wrote right on without lapse of time or break of thought to the close of the twenty-first chapter. Nevertheless, to my own mind, the most natural and satisfactory view is that the Gospel really closes with the last words of the twentieth chapter; and that after a longer or shorter period the author added what we have in the twenty-first chapter as a postscript. By the concatenation of events it is vitally linked with the preceding, but in form it appears to be something added to that which had been considered as finished. This view satisfactorily accounts both for the juxtaposition of thought and the form of literary expression.

The author's motive for writing this postscript seems to have been twofold. First, his Gospel may have been criticised as fragmentary and incomplete. He therefore decided to add an account of the very important manifestation of the risen Lord to His disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. Having done this, at the close of the postscript he formally defends the incompleteness of his Gospel by saying, “And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written”. But, in the second place, from what transpired at this third manifestation of Christ

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to His disciples, a report sprang up and had gone abroad among believers that Jesus had declared that the author of this Gospel should not die. It was a false report and on that ground alone, an honest man would be strongly moved to contradict it; but the report put the writer into wrong relations with his fellow disciples. As the brethren of Joseph regarded him as a favorite of their Father, so, if this false rumor should remain uncontradicted, the disciples might regard the writer of this Gospel as one on whom Jesus had conferred special honors. If the report should not be corrected, it might awaken jealousies, jeopardize the success of the apostle's labor, and stand in the way of the establishment of the Kingdom of God. So, near the close of his postscript he takes pains explicitly and positively to contradict it.

If it should be asked why the author did not in his postscript simply deny the false rumor concerning himself, without treating at considerable length the third manifestation of Jesus to His disciples after His resurrection, the obvious answer is, that he felt it to be important to place fully before the disciples all the circumstances out of which such a rumor arose. Thus all could see how naturally it sprung up, and that it was simply a perversion of a very important ethical lesson. This lesson we shall consider later in its proper relation.

That the body of the Gospel and this postscript were written by the same hand scarcely admits of a doubt. Both were evidently penned by an eye-witness. We grant that there may be some incidents delineated in this Gospel of which the writer may not have been personally cognizant and which may have been reported to him by Jesus Himself; but nearly the whole of this Gospel is manifestly the testimony of what the writer saw and heard. Take for instance the record of the first miracle at Cana of Galilee, where as invited guests at a wedding were Jesus, His mother and His disciples. During the progress of the feast the wine is exhausted. On account of it the family is greatly embarrassed, and Jesus' mother, sharing in their anxiety, hastens to her Son and delicately suggests to Him that He should work a miracle to meet the exigency. He gently rebukes her. She, however, nothing daunted, said to the servants, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it". In due time He said to them, "Fill with water the six stone waterpots", and they filled them up to the brim. Then in the presence of its Lord the water blushes into wine; whereupon He commands them to draw it out and bear it to the ruler of the feast. He in astonishment comments on the superior excellence of the wine. If any one should now tell a story of a wedding, artlessly painting the scene in all of its interesting details, the hearer would instinctively exclaim, "Why, you were there then!"; and the hearer would think for the nonce that he was there too. What may be said of this, we are also constrained to say of most of the scenes depicted in this Gospel. Jesus at Jacob's well, in the household at Bethany, at the grave of Lazarus, in the upper room when He said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger and see My hands", and many other notable incidents are so narrated that ordinary, intelligent readers never for a moment



doubt that we have here the words of one who saw and heard what he reports.

If we turn to this postscript we find the same subtle, convincing evidence that the writer of it declared what was presented to his eye and ear. There were together seven disciples; three of them are named by the writer and partially described; two are not named but are so described that we know who they were; two others are not identified. Then we have the declaration by the foremost disciple that he is going a fishing, and the quick response of the rest that they would go with him. Then follows their fruitless toiling during the night, the Stranger on the shore just at the grey dawn, His friendly salutation, and His direction as to handling the net which brought instant success, the swim of Peter to the shore, the burning coals, the bread, the fish, the breakfast, the colloquy that followed,—all so unmistakably suggest the words of an eye and ear witness, that a fool could not err in reference to it. If an eye-witness wrote this Gospel and this postscript of it, they were not written by some elder, whose name was John, who lived about the middle of the second century.

Again, the style of both the Gospel and the postscript shows that the same hand that wrote the one wrote also the other. The style of this writer is distinctive, unique; it is distinctive in its severe simplicity; in its clear and subtle distinctions; in its suggestions of vast unexplored regions of thought. The critics say that he did not write good Greek, classical Greek; grant it, but he so wrote that he has impressed and stirred the profoundest intellects of all the ages of the Christian church, and has also been read with special delight and profit by the lowly of all lands. And this simple, subtle, suggestive style characterizes both the Gospel and its postscript.

Moreover, this eye-witness with his unmatched style sets forth in both the Gospel and the postscript the same great thought. While fully and unhesitatingly presenting to us the humanity of Christ, he wrote that he might set forth with special emphasis His divine nature, His deity. So the first sentence of his Gospel is: "In the beginning", in eternity, "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten [begotten as no other being ever was] from the Father), full of grace and truth". In His conflict with the Pharisees He announces Himself as that bread that came down from heaven, of which if a man eat he shall never hunger; He claims that He shall raise the dead and judge the world, and calls upon all men to honor Him even as they honor the Father; He declares that He existed before Abraham, that he that hath seen Him hath seen the Father, that all that the Father possesses He possesses,—“All things that are Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine”; He prays to the Father, “Glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was”. And just at the close of the Gospel, Thomas, delivered from all doubt of Christ’s resurrection, said unto Him, “My Lord and my God”. Then the writer of the Gospel adds: “These things are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God”.

The great truth that Jesus is the Son of God, the divine Lord, is also the central, unifying thought of the postscript. It is the risen Lord that manifests Himself on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias, provides food for His hungry followers, controls the fish of the sea, presents Himself as the supreme object of their love, commands the foremost disciple to follow Him, unveils to him the manner of His death, and speaks of His own future coming.

Who is the eye-witness that wrote both this Gospel and postscript alike in style, dominated by the same great vitalizing thought of a divine Saviour? The writer himself replies: "I am he who leaned back on His breast (on Jesus' breast) at the supper, and said, 'Lord, who is he that betrayeth Thee?' I wrote these things, and know that what I have written is true". And after all the hair-splitting criticism of the past and of today, on good and sufficient evidence we hold fast to the position that John the apostle wrote both the Gospel and the postscript.

But a more important matter demands our attention. What is the real significance of this postscript? What is its central, unifying idea? Is it not Peter's confession of supreme love to the divine Christ and his public restoration to the office that the Master had called him to fill, and from which, by his denial he had fallen? So far as we are able let us grasp the meaning of this great passage of Scripture.

Since His resurrection, Jesus had already appeared twice to the eleven; once to ten of them on the evening of His resurrection day, in the upper room at Jerusalem, Thomas being absent; one week later in the same room to them all, Thomas being present, when with all the ardor of his nature he said to Christ, "My Lord and my God". Now for many days Jesus left these disciples to their own reflections. At last time began to hang heavily on mind and heart; for their own happiness they needed employment. Most of them also were poor. It is not unlikely that their purses needed replenishing. In these circumstances it was very natural for them to turn to that calling with which they were most familiar. And just as we should reasonably expect, the energetic, impulsive Peter was the first to say to his fellows, "I go a fishing". It needed only this declaration from him to elicit their prompt response, "We also come with thee". They got into a boat in the evening and pushed out a little way from shore, and began their toil for the night. There were only seven of them, Peter, Thomas, Nathaniel, James and John, and two others whose names are not mentioned. As it is sometimes with fishermen, their toil during the live-long night was bootless. Just at the break of day they saw, as they supposed, a stranger on the shore. But this stranger evidently had a lively interest in them, for His voice came sweetly across the waters, "Children, have ye aught to eat?" They respectfully answered the questioner, "No". Did not the address, "children" make them think that He was not wholly a stranger? He cried to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and ye shall find". There was something commanding and compelling in the words that He uttered, for they at once do His bidding. Immediately the net is filled with fish. It is so heavy that

they are not able to draw it up into the boat; they can only drag it along in the sea. What passed through John's mind we do not certainly know. Perhaps he remembered a similar draught of fishes from that same sea soon after they began to follow the Lord. Perhaps he thought, there stands the one who is Lord of "whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas". But whatever was the process of his thought, as soon as the net was filled with fishes, John said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Peter heard that, he girt his coat about him, plunged into the sea and swam straight to the shore. He must be the first to greet his Lord! Peter's feeling was vastly different from what it was when, near the beginning of Christ's ministry, obeying the word of Jesus he let down his net and enclosed a multitude of fishes. At that time he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord"; but Peter had grown spiritually since that day. Now, instead of praying the Lord to depart from him he swims to the shore that he may at once be with Him. What passed between them we do not know. The rest of the disciples came in the boat dragging the net with fishes. Stepping upon the shore an unexpected sight greeted their eyes. There were at their feet glowing coals, toasting bread and broiling fish. Their Lord had not been unmindful of their hunger, and had bountifully provided for their wants. But since it is His will that men should ever co-operate with Him in meeting their necessities, He said, "Bring of the fish which ye have now taken". It is now the ardent, zealous Peter, who, before any of his fellow disciples, steps onto the boat, grasps the net and drags it to the shore. How natural the action that follows! They all gather about the full but unrent net and count the fishes taken out, perhaps more than once, and find that there are one hundred, fifty and three. Some of them are now probably dressed and broiled that the repast may be abundant for these hungry fishermen. And when all is ready, the Lord, the provider of the table, says to them, "Come and break your fast", just our familiar, "Come to breakfast".

But thus far in the passage there is no hint that the disciples talked with Jesus. There is a strong indication that they did not. They seemed to have been filled with reverential awe. They knew that it was the Lord; but as gratifying as it would have been to have their positive conviction confirmed by a declaration from His lips, no one of them ventured to ask, "Who art Thou?" And at the moment when the breakfast was fully prepared, Jesus seemed to have been standing a little aloof from them, for He "*cometh* and taketh the bread and giveth them, and the fish likewise". He who provided the feast is both the host and the servant of His hungry brethren.

We come now to the great central lesson of the Scripture in hand. The preceding lessons are of high import. The waiting of these disciples after their risen Lord showed Himself to them the second time must have seemed to them long and weary. It must have been a severe trial to their faith. But His third appearance to them showed them that their Lord had not forgotten nor abandoned them. Ever watchful over them, and still training



them for their future labor, He once more taught them by this draught of fishes that their future success in catching men, lifting them out of this world and bringing them into His kingdom, depended on prompt obedience to His word; not by their toil alone, however persistent, but by His accompanying and energizing word should they realize their mission. That draught of fishes was putting into concrete form the old, but ever vital prophetic message, "Not by might nor by power, but by My spirit saith the Lord of hosts". He had also taught them by the breakfast which He had prepared for them on the shore that it was His purpose to care even for the bodily wants of His toiling disciples. They were not to expect luxury, but such wholesome food as would fit them for the most efficient labor in saving souls. But all this simply led up to a still more important lesson for them all, and especially for Peter, to whom it was particularly directed.

The breakfast was over. The appetites of all were satisfied. The divine host, the risen Lord, turned His eyes full upon Peter. It may have reminded that disciple of the look which the suffering Saviour gave him in the palace of Caiaphas, which melted him to repentance; and as the risen Lord looked way down into the depths of Peter's heart, the searching words were poured into his ears, "Simon, son of John (R. V.), lovest thou Me more than these?" This disciple had received from his Lord the name of Peter, but in this interview Jesus discards it and goes back to the old name of His disciple. In view of what he did at his Lord's trial before Caiaphas, to have called him Peter, Rock, would have been little short of cutting, bitter sarcasm. This, in probing Peter's conscience, the Lord avoids.

Also in this first question Jesus used the phrase, "More than these". The interrogatory was, "Do you love Me more genuinely, more truly than do your fellow disciples? Is your love superior to that of these brethren with whom you have just partaken of this frugal meal?" This carried Peter back a few days to the time of his self-confidence and self-assurance, to the hour when his Lord said, "All ye shall be offended in Me this night", and he in his overweening trust in himself had contradicted his Master and declared, "If all shall be offended in Thee", if all shall stumble into sin because of Thee, on account of what Thou art or dost, "I will never be offended", I will never stumble into sin, thus putting himself above his fellows. And when in spite of his lofty and loud profession of fidelity Jesus said to him, "This night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice", he vehemently affirmed, "Even if I must die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee". But while his boastful words still rung in the ears of his fellow disciples, he, on account of what his Lord was passing through, stumbled more deeply into sin than any of them, cowardly denying his Lord, even with cursing and swearing. Of his assumed superiority over his fellows, of his boastfulness and shameful fall, those words, "more than these", forcefully reminded him. But when he answered the heart-searching question, he made no allusion to others, but simply affirmed his love to his Lord, justifying the sincerity of his profession by appealing to the Lord's knowledge of his heart: "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee". Boast-

fulness over others is gone; trust in the omniscient Lord has taken the place of trust in self. On the basis of this profession of his love, the Master bade him, "Feed My lambs".

But the Lord said the second time, "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?" and received the same answer as before; and on the basis of Peter's twice-professed love, He bade him, "Tend My sheep".

But the third time the same question came from the lips of the risen Lord, and "Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, lovest thou Me?" Why was he grieved?

Ordinarily such repetition of a question would suggest to the one interrogated that the questioner doubted his truthfulness. But Peter's twice-repeated "Thou knowest that I love Thee" seems to me to preclude the entertainment of any such notion by him. And Jesus' commands, "Feed My lambs,—tend My sheep", apparently show that Jesus thoroughly believed that Peter was honest and that his love was genuine. So Peter could not have been grieved by entertaining the notion that the Lord doubted him.

His grief arose from the fact that the third repetition of the question brought back vividly and powerfully the whole scene of his cowardly denial. Before his fall Jesus said to him, "Thou shalt deny Me thrice"—*three times*. When he had entered into the court of the palace of Caiaphas, the maid that kept the door accused him of being a disciple of the Nazarene, and he denied it. He now retreated from the fire in the open court, where he was warming himself, into the shadow of the arch that led from the street to the court; but very soon another maid saw him and said to the crowd in the court, "This man also was with Jesus the Nazarene", and he denied it with an oath. He again joins those who stood by the fire, and they at once question him, "Art thou also one of His disciples?" He denied, and said, "I am not". Twice now, before all those in the open court he has denied his Lord, confirming his last denial with a solemn oath.

About an hour after, they in the open court declared to Peter, "Of a truth thou art also one of them, for thy speech betrayeth thee", thou art a Galilean. And one of them directly appealed to him, "Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?" Peter now lost his balance, began to curse and swear, and declare between his oaths that he did not know Jesus. This is the third denial. Now the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. Then the crowing of the cock brought to the mind of the faithless disciple Jesus' words, "Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice"—*three times*. Keenly conscious of his threefold denial Peter wept, and went out of the court and found some secret place and there wept bitterly. That *three-fold denial* prophesied by Christ, enacted by Peter, was branded upon the very substance of his soul. He could never forget it. Tradition says that ever after there was a tear in his eye. Jesus by the words, "more than these", had already carried him back to the hour of his boastful self-confidence, and the whole sad history that followed was vividly before him. He heard the Master again, "Thou shalt deny Me three times",—his three awful denials sounded through the halls

of his memory; nothing so aroused and touched him to the quick as that *three times*. This the Master knew; and that he might probe His disciple's conscience to the core, three times He asked, "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?" But when He asked it the third time, Peter's soul was pierced with the sharpest grief, and he answered, very likely with tears and sobs, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee". "Jesus said unto him, Feed My sheep".

What was the Lord's object in all this? Surely He would not have caused His disciple to feel any unnecessary pang. But Peter had greatly sinned. The fact that all things considered he was the foremost disciple made his offence all the greater. So the Lord determined thoroughly to probe his conscience; that through and through he might be contrite and might realize in the very depths of his consciousness that he had repented of his great sin. And it was important also that he should make this three-fold confession of his love for Jesus before his fellow disciples, that they too might be fully and impressively assured of the depth and genuineness of his compunction.

Nor must we forget that he had been openly chosen by Christ to do a great and specific work, and had been put by Him into the most exalted office of the infant church. On the one hand he was called to be a fisher of men—that was his distinctive task; but on the other hand, he with others had been separated from the rank and file of the followers of Christ and made an apostle,—that was his high station.

Moreover, with two others he had been distinguished even from the twelve and drawn into closer personal relations with his Lord than they. On account of this intimate relationship he went with Jesus up into the Mount of Transfiguration. In an ever memorable interview he had been foremost in confessing that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the living God", and in turn had received the special blessing of his Lord. When Jesus felt the sorest need of human sympathy, Peter with James and John had gone with Him into the shadow and gloom of Gethsemane. But by his open and thrice-repeated denial of the Lord who had so highly honored him, he had miserably fallen from his high vocation and office and brought discredit upon his great confession. It was therefore necessary that his restoration to his work and office should be, if possible, as public and conspicuous as had been his denial and fall. He himself needed to know that his Lord had not only forgiven his great sin, but had recalled him to his work and had put him once more into his former position. If in the future he was to work effectively for the salvation of men, there must not be so much as one faint, lingering doubt of his complete pardon by his Lord and full restoration to his work and apostleship. This was necessary, not only for him, but also for his fellow apostles. To insure their faith in Peter and in his leadership, they too must know beyond peradventure that the past had been blotted out by Christ, and that he who under stress and in fear had denied his Lord, had once more His full confidence, and was re-commissioned by Him to do the work and to fill the office to which he was originally called.



So the Master, in the presence of six of Peter's apostolic associates, bids him three times, answering to his threefold denial and threefold confession of love, to care for and nourish the lambs and sheep of his flock. If, in the future, some one objecting should say, "Why is this apostle, who thrice denied his Lord, so prominent and aggressive in service?"—six men, associates with him in labor, could bear witness that the risen Lord, in their presence and hearing, three times commanded him to do this work; He solemnly re-commissioned him thrice over to care for those who believe in Him and follow Him; over against each shameful denial He placed His renewed commission, "Feed My lambs; Feed My sheep". And if, thereafter, the conscience of Peter at times should accuse him afresh for his recreant acts and words in the palace of Caiaphas—as it doubtless did—he would hear over against his repeated denial the Master's repeated re-commission, and be reassured and comforted and enabled to go on in peace with his great work.

While his work was *one*, it was two-sided. He was under Christ to bring men out of the world into the kingdom of God; according to the terms of his original commission he was to catch men—and then nourish them and build them up "into the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ". Peter certainly did the first; how successfully the results of his preaching at Jerusalem on the day of Pentacost, and subsequently in the house of Cornelius in Cæsarea testify. But it is worthy of note that when the risen Lord, at the Sea of Tiberias, re-commissioned Peter it was the second phase of his work that he specially emphasized, the nourishing, the caring for the sheep. Jesus had intimated to Peter, even before his denial, that this was to be his pre-eminent task. Predicting his temporary downfall, He said—oh, with what tender solicitude—"But I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not; and do thou when once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren". The Epistles of Peter bear witness that the apostle gave himself with great assiduity to the work of feeding "the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia". And in his first Epistle the once self-confident apostle strengthened the brethren not only with the great central truths of the Gospel, but also out of the depths of his own experience as he wrote: "Yea, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another; for God resisteth the proud"—that is the cry from Peter's soul, when he went out and wept bitterly—"but giveth grace to the humble"—an echo of what was granted to contrite humble Peter when his risen Lord, forgiving and forgetting His great sin, said to him, "Feed My lambs".

And we must not fail to notice that the Lord in this personal colloquy with Peter made love, just as Paul did, the supreme grace. He did not ask his penitent apostle whether he believed in Him, or had hope of eternal life, but whether he loved Him, and on the emphatic confession of that grace He publicly restored him to his work and office. The Lord demanded positive, unmistakable love because that grace pre-eminently determines character. What a man loves reveals unerringly what he is.

Moreover, the object towards which we must exercise supreme love is here clearly presented to us. "Lovest thou *Me*?" Jesus did not ask, "Dost thou love God?"—although He had taught with iteration and emphasis that the first great commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matt. 22:37). Did He then in this colloquy with Peter repudiate what He had before taught? Nay, verily! He who talked with penitent Simon, "in the beginning"—in eternity—"was with God, and was God". It was He concerning whom Jehovah said: "Let all the angels of God worship Him". He had become flesh and dwelt among us. He had conquered death on our behalf. Just because He was God, He claimed for Himself the absolute love of Peter. "Lovest thou *Me*?" Before His crucifixion He said to Philip: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father"; and with His reiterated question to Simon before us, without any fear of making a mistake, we can add: "He that loves the risen Lord loves the Father". That the Father is well pleased when we render supreme love to Christ, Jesus declares in these words: "He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father" (John 14:21).

But in the report of Christ's conversation with penitent Peter on the shore of Tiberias, do the words used by John to designate the act of loving throw any special light on this great transaction? In the first and second questions we have *agapao*; this word signifies loving with esteem; it usually involves the notion of admiration of righteous character, and the purpose of bestowing kindness on the one esteemed and admired. Its Latin synonym is *diligo*. It is a word that pre-eminently expresses the Christian conception of loving.

In the third question we find *phileo*. This signifies love which expresses itself through feeling, emotion; it conveys the notion of instinctive, warm, personal affection. This verb is found in every one of Peter's replies; probably expressing his warm personal affection for Jesus. Its Latin synonym is *amo*. Some interpreters think that Jesus' use of *phileo* instead of *agapao*, in the third question, was what caused the grief of Peter; they suggest that the word made Peter think that the Lord called in question his personal attachment to Him, and this broke the heart of the ardent disciple.

But all such interpretations, it seems to me, inject into the text what it does not contain. We grant freely that there is a distinction between the two verbs, *agapao* and *phileo*; but the demarcation between them is not rigid and absolute. The classical Greek writer expressed by *phileo* not only warm personal love, but also love of esteem for character. But, confining ourselves simply to the writings of the New Testament, it is clear that in them these two words were sometimes used interchangeably. To be sure, *agapao* is used in a very large majority of the passages where the act of love is set forth, but not in all. And it is not always used to express esteem for righteousness or righteous character, but sometimes to express the love of self and self. For example, the Pharisees loved (*agapao*) the chief seats in the synagogue (Luke 11:42), and Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved

(*agapao*) the hire of wrong-doing. And while *agapao* is more frequently employed by New Testament writers than *phileo*, the latter is often used by them to set forth love not only in the lower but also in the higher relations, and they employed both alike to express love on the same plane and for the same object. For example, Jesus says of the Pharisees (Matt. 23:6) they love (*phileo*) the chief places at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogue; whereas Luke reports (Luke 11:43) Jesus as saying to the Pharisees, "Ye love (*agapao*) the chief seats in the synagogue". In these passages the two verbs are used interchangeably; the one regarded as fit as the other to express love for that which ministers to personal vanity.

It has been claimed that *agapao* is the word used to express love in all the higher and more sacred relations of life, and we grant that in the New Testament it is by far the most frequently employed to set forth love in such relations, but by no means exclusively. For example, while Paul (Eph. 5:25) in one Epistle exhorts husbands to love (*agapao*) their wives, in another Epistle (Titus 2:4) he directs that the young women be trained to love (*phileo*) their husbands and their children. *Phileo* is also used in the same Epistle to express brotherly love (Titus 3:15): "Salute them that love (*phileo*) us in faith". And in 1 Pet. 3:8 we read: "Loving (*phileo*) as brethren"; the Greek word is a compound, "brethren-lovers".

*Phileo* is also used in the New Testament to express the love that men should have to the Lord. Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 16:22): "If any man loveth (*phileo*) not the Lord, let him be anathema". And it is also employed to set forth Christ's love both to His special friends and to His children. Of His love to His special friends we have two examples, in both of which the two verbs are used interchangeably (John 11:5): "Now Jesus loved (*agapao*) Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus"; but as Jesus went weeping to the grave of Lazarus, the Jews who were looking on said, "Behold how He loved (*phileo*) him". But, if possible, we have a more striking example of the interchangeable use of these verbs in the characterization of Jesus's special love for John. In John 13:23 we read: "There was at the table reclining in Jesus' bosom one of His disciples whom Jesus loved" (*agapao*); but on the morning of the resurrection, we are told by the same writer (20:2), that Mary Magdalene "cometh to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved" (*phileo*).

But in the Revelation the love of the exalted and glorified Jesus for His followers is expressed by *phileo* (Rev. 3:19), "As many as I love (*phileo*) I rebuke and chasten". But our argument is cumulative, since, in the New Testament the love of God the Father for His children is expressed by *phileo*. Jesus, in His great farewell discourse, said to His disciples (John 16:27): "For the Father Himself loveth you (*phileo*), because ye have loved (*phileo*) Me". Here we have both the love of God to His children and their love to His eternal Son expressed by *phileo*. But *phileo* was regarded by John as a fit vehicle for the expression of the love of God the Father for His only-begotten Son (John 5:20). In reporting Jesus' words he says, "For the Father loveth (*phileo*) the Son".



We see, then, that *phileo* is employed by New Testament writers, and especially by the writer of the Fourth Gospel, to express love even in all the highest and most sacred relations of men to one another and to God, and of God to men, and even of the Father to the Son. Moreover, we have seen how the author of the Fourth Gospel, at times, uses the two verbs, *agapao* and *phileo*, interchangeably. If he did this in the body of his Gospel, in all probability he did it also in the postscript of his Gospel. And such marked distinctions between these verbs as the critics have made, distinctions of which John evidently never dreamed, loads a simple and important narrative with far-fetched philological speculations which obscure its real meaning, which shroud its light in mist. John probably instinctively used both of these verbs, which are substantially synonymous, just as any writer would do now, simply to give variety to his diction and avoid monotony of style.

But still another consideration, it seems to us, ought to check the speculations of commentators on the difference in the meaning of these two verbs. Whether Jesus in His colloquy with Peter used one word to express the act of loving or two words we cannot tell.

If He used two, whether there was a shade of difference between them we cannot now ascertain. We have no conclusive evidence that He spoke Greek. That He possibly might have done so we must of course grant, since both John and Peter, a few years later, wrote in that tongue. But scholars generally hold that Jesus spoke Aramaic. In that dialect of the Hebrew He and Peter probably spoke with each other on the shore of Tiberias. That John has faithfully reported the conversation I, for one, have not the shadow of a doubt. But if in the colloquy Jesus used two words to express the act of loving, nobody now knows what they were, so no one can now intelligently speculate about them. While the two verbs found in John's report, we have already shown, were used interchangeably by him in his Gospel and in all probability in the twenty-first chapter, which we have treated as a postscript to his Gospel.

It still remains for us to inquire what is meant by the love on which Jesus so strenuously insisted. Not, certainly, simply emotion excited by some object and lavished upon it. That emotion attends love is true, but it is not the love itself. In the last analysis love is pre-eminently preference. One who loves prefers some object above all others, and that preference bends all the powers of the one preferring to the service of the object supremely preferred. Such a preference, leading all the activities of the soul in its train is always attended with pleasurable sensibility, often with powerful emotion; but to mistake the sensibility or the emotion for the love, for supreme preference, frequently leads to mischief. Now, this is the purport of Jesus' question to Peter. "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me, preferest thou Me above all others? So preferest thou Me that every energy of thy being flows full-tide into glad service to Me?"

This question leads us finally to ask, What are the fruits of such love? Regarding Christ as the one supremely preferred, such preference, such

love, naturally expresses itself in obedience and service. And here we discern another ligament which binds this postscript with the body of the Gospel. Christ in His last great discourse to His disciples before His agony in the garden said: "If ye love Me ye will keep My commandments". He here calls on Peter to illustrate this general principle in his life. By His probing questions He makes His disciple more profoundly conscious of love to Him; He still further deepens Peter's consciousness of love by leading him ardently to profess it again and again, and at each profession of it He calls upon him to manifest it in obedience and loving service. "Thou knowest that I love Thee", says the penitent Peter; "Then", says the risen Lord, "show your love by tenderly caring for My sheep".

But such love not only expresses itself in assiduous toil for others, but it enables those who exercise it to endure without murmur the severest hardships and sharpest trials in the service of their divine Lord. Jesus had no sooner said in response to Simon's third confession of his love, "Feed My sheep", than, without a break, He went straight on to say to him: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young thou girdedst thyself and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. But this He spake, signifying by what manner of death he should glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He saith unto him, Follow Me".

The writer has not left us in doubt as to the main import of these words; they were a prophesy that Peter, after he had grown gray in his Master's service, should suffer a violent death. "Thou shalt stretch forth thy hands and another shall gird thee", may be a distinctive prophecy that he should be taken into custody by the officers of the government, who would bind his hands with cords, just as they bound Jesus' hands when they apprehended Him in the Garden of Gethsemane, and carry him whither he would not—take him away to his trial in the court—or the words may refer to death by crucifixion. When one was crucified he was not always nailed to a cross, but sometimes lashed to it by cords. The cross was laid on the ground, the victim was bound to it; it was then lifted with the victim upon it to an upright position and made fast in the earth. The few words of Jesus may have been an outline picture of this. But if reasonable objection may be made to any specific interpretation of the words, John, by his comment has made it clear that they refer to Simon's martyrdom. And that reveals their vital connection with what goes immediately before. For when Jesus had predicted Simon's violent death He said to him, "Follow Me". "Your love must be such that it will lead you to follow Me, whatever awaits you. You may have manifold and bitter trials; a violent death when you are an old man will be your lot, nevertheless, follow me; if that love that you have thrice so emphatically confessed is genuine, you will not only gladly feed My sheep, but for My sake you will die without a murmur, lashed to a cross".

"But last of all, if your love is genuine it will enable you to be steadfast in My service irrespective of what I do to others". Peter followed his risen Lord as He walked along the shore of the Sea of Tiberias, and looking back he saw John a little behind them, also following. Now as the Lord had lifted the curtain and revealed to Peter something of his future, his curiosity was excited to know what was to be John's career and fate; so he asked: "Lord, and what shall this man do?" Jesus saith unto him, "If I will that he tarry till I come what is that to thee?" Then again Jesus said to him, "Follow thou Me". "No matter how I may order the life of John, his career and fate do not change your duty. If I will that he tarry on the earth until I come again, that will not absolve you from My service. If you indeed love Me you will follow Me, however much the condition of others may differ from your own".

This chapter, then, so full of varied and interesting incident is instinct with one great thought, the genuine love of the disciple for his Master. All the events in the first of the chapter lead directly up to the question which the risen Lord asks Simon. It is an inquiry as to the fact of his love to Him. His love for Jesus is thrice confessed. Its fruit is obedient service, no matter how bitter the trials such service may involve, or how the Lord may see fit to make our condition to differ from that of others.

We have considered not merely an interesting fact of Gospel history, but a truth which "takes hold on our business and bosoms". Simon's risen Lord is ours also. He asks us, as we read this Scripture, the same question that He asked him. "James, son of Charles, lovest thou Me? Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. Then nurture those children that I have given thee 'in the chastening and admonition of the Lord'". "Theodore, son of Christopher, lovest thou Me? Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love Thee. Then use honestly your talent for making money, and gather wealth not for selfish ends, but for the betterment of your fellow men". "Jacob, son of Robert, lovest thou Me? Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. Then go out into the streets and lanes of your city, find those who do not know Me and tell them of My love and My salvation". "Martha, daughter of Alfred, lovest thou Me? Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. Then, make home for your children the most attractive place on earth, and so far as possible minister to the sick and cheer the disconsolate in your own neighborhood, remembering that inasmuch as ye do it unto even the least of these ye do it unto Me". Both our usefulness and our destiny are determined by the answer that we can truthfully give to our risen Lord's soul-testing question, "Lovest thou Me?"



## \* THE TEACHING FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH.

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A theme of great interest, but not as novel as many imagine. More than 200 years ago our Congregational churches of New England called to their service both a pastor and a teacher. It is forced upon our careful attention by the far-reaching changes of the past decade or two in methods and principles of instruction. While the phrases are overworked, there is a new psychology and a new pedagogy to be reckoned with. Each bases its advocated principles upon accurate observation of data taken from life. They are in a true sense practical. Behind each of them is the historical foundation laid today for every subject of human knowledge and, in particular, for the study of the Bible.

Two principles find broad application in the consideration of the theme of the teaching function of the church. The first is that no hard and fast line can be drawn between religious and secular education. All instruction should have a broad religious setting. No pupil should be able to distinguish the two kinds of education by any marked difference of attitude or method. The second is that education is, to borrow Professor Coe's expressive definition, "training for self-expression". Knowing is not the only fundamental quality of mind, and knowledge is not the only end of education. The older education gave intellectual training a disproportionate place; it cultivated the memory and logical powers. Hence a man might become well-educated religiously without necessarily becoming religious. We recognize today the importance of the will. Education is the harmonious development of the personality.

The chief responsibility for religious education today rests with the church. Neither the home nor the public school achieves the needed results. It is a pastor's problem, since he is the one person who stands in a working relationship to every contributing factor. Such a pastor must of necessity be a trained pastor, acquainted with actual needs, capable of critical leadership. It is a problem never actually settled, yet nearer a working solution today than ever before.

The available avenues of religious impression, instruction and training are the home, the church and the school.

The problem of religious education in the home is a serious one. With unequalled advantage for fostering a religious consciousness, the natural

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\* Abstract of address delivered at the Seventh Conference, held at the Central Congregational Church, April 13, 1904.

opportunities of home life are being yielded or ignored. The grace at meals, family prayers, the familiar discussion of religious themes, the common study of a weekly lesson in the Bible—all are passing, not so much because of indifference or timidity as because of a subtle change in the attitude of people to religious obligations.

The problem of religious education in the church is more complicated. All ages, all methods, all objects must be kept in mind: ideals, knowledge, habits, artistic impressions. The crying problem of today is that of the Sunday School: its scientific gradation, the distinction of working departments, the adoption of effective courses of study, the training of teachers. Attention is now being called to the need of a *trained* superintendent, of the increase of the time allotted to the Sunday School, of the variation of instruction, of the adaptation of courses of study, of the broadening of the curriculum, so that it may include, beside the Bible, an opportunity in special classes to receive instruction upon missions, church polity, church history, the distinguished men and methods of the church, a religious interpretation of national history and of the life of today.

The problem of religious education in the school is insistent. In the college it is in process of solution. In the private school a start has been made. In public schools the principles which must govern the solution of the problem are still in debate. Denominationalism and theology may well be barred from our public schools, but why religion? To refuse the teacher the opportunity of giving simple expression to the common religious needs of mankind is deliberately to secularize the growing mind. A simple opening service and the freedom to interpret religiously the workaday world is sufficient and unobjectionable.

The Religious Education Association has already exhibited such strength that there are signs of real promise for the future. An organized attempt to study these problems will lead to their thorough discussion and rational solution.

## \* THE METHOD OF JESUS WITH INDIVIDUALS.

(ST. JOHN 3: 1-16; 4: 5-26.)

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None of the Gospels is more carefully planned than the Fourth. And in nothing is this care more apparent than in the many contrasts which it contains between persons and ideas of different classes. We are now concerned with one of these most striking comparisons between the treatment of Nicodemus, the Pharisee, and of the sinful woman of Samaria by one and the same Master and Saviour, Jesus Christ. For nothing seems more clear than that in the arrangement of the material it is intended to bring these persons into contrast and to display the power of Jesus over both.

Nicodemus has had the most scholarly training of his day and his country. He has lived the self-respecting life of integrity which men would expect from one who made his professions and occupied his position. There is no reason to suspect that he belonged to the class of Pharisees who were hypocrites, but, rather to the class of Pharisees who were sincere Puritans, and very earnest, religious men. He belonged to the best kind of learned teacher and authoritative ruler in the morally purest society of the ancient world; and he came to Jesus, not, perhaps, without a touch of condescension in his tone, and yet not without an undercurrent of very earnest inquiry, which we feel as the conversation proceeds.

In the other conversation, we have one who belongs to the lowest classes, considered, not in relation to possessions, but to character; one who has been accustomed for years to meet the contemptuous gaze of her fellow citizens, and who has learned with a brazen face to outface it all; one whose name probably was notorious in that little city for the kind of life she had been living, utterly careless of the ordinary standards of self respect and honor amongst her fellow citizens. She, to whom religion must seem to be a very strange thing, and the claims of the higher life a matter for mockery and raillery, rather than for appreciation and interest, she also comes in contact with Jesus.

How does Jesus become the teacher of two people who stand at the opposite extremes of moral self-respect, of intellectual education, of social position and influence? Can He, does He become the real teacher, the inspirer of two hearts so entirely diverse, the one in almost every particular the contradiction of the other? Is He able to adapt the eternal truth so that it shall take hold of the cold dignity of Nicodemus, and take hold also

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of the passionate abandonment of the woman of Samaria? Can He so reveal God to each of these, that the same God shall make them other than they have been? Where shall He insert the sword of the Spirit into the linked armor that encases the self-righteous heart of Nicodemus, and how shall He touch the open, festering sore of the heart of the woman of Samaria? How shall one man become the divine Teacher and Saviour of Nicodemus and the divine Teacher and Saviour of that woman? Is it possible? Is it conceivable? The disciples gradually learned from this Teacher that it is possible, and John has here presented to us the way in which this Teacher, this Master, this Saviour can let in light into all hearts, can bring people from all quarters of the moral universe to the feet of the one God, and can flash everlasting truth alike upon the ignorant and dark mind of the debased, and upon the dark mind, also, of the most thoroughly trained intellectualist of His generation. How is it that He does this?

1. Observe that when Jesus meets with Nicodemus, He meets with one who has come with inquiry concerning Him upon his lips. The first words which Nicodemus says to Him are "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a Teacher come from God, for no man can do these signs that Thou doest, except God be with him". He belongs to those who have been watching Jesus as He lived and worked there in Jerusalem. From that class, as we are told in the immediately preceding verse, "Many believed on His name, beholding the signs which He did". He belongs to those who watched Jesus, alike, when He healed the sick and when He appeared, solitary, in the grandeur of moral indignation, to cleanse the temple courts of all their irreligious and immoral foulness, and saw that He proved Himself master of every moral situation. And these men, who are all trained to watch the signs of the times and who are quick to interpret every deed that He does and every word that He speaks, as a religious claim, these men say:—"Who is this and what can He tell us? We listened some time ago to John the Baptist, and he told us that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Here is One who comes after him and carries on his work, not now down at the Jordan, but up here at the very heart of Israel's life. He does not dwell there, dipping men in the water. He comes here to wash out the temple courts with His own Spirit. He comes here to bless people in the midst of their sorrows, in the midst of their sins, in the midst of all their daily life. Who is this and what has He to say about the Kingdom of God? When is it coming? Is it any nearer, now that He speaks instead of John the Baptist? Has it come closer to Jerusalem, closer to us all? Shall our eyes see it? Shall our feet bear us into its glorious reality? Shall we behold the kingdom and be members of it; we, who live and breathe now, members of the eternal Kingdom of Jehovah?"

These are the questions that are in the heart of Nicodemus, ready to pour forth from his lips, one after another, in rapid, eager haste. And Jesus, piercing at once to the heart of the situation, answers him and says,—  
"Verily, verily, the most real thing and the most essential thing I have to say to you, Nicodemus, the starting point of all, the thing you must know

before I can explain anything else, the thing you must understand and lay hold of before I can describe the Kingdom of God and answer any questions about it, the first essential thing to know is, that, except a man, except you, Nicodemus, be born again, you can not see the Kingdom of God". It was an astounding blow to give Nicodemus, a blow that staggered him; and he talked like a little child and stumbled about the meaning of the words that Jesus was using,—“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God”.

“He can not see it”. The Kingdom of God may be all around you and you are blind to it. The Kingdom of God might fill the atmosphere with its glory and your eyes remain untouched by one of its rays. The Kingdom of God might be sending its thrilling fires into hearts all round you, organizing its membership, gathering to itself the kingdoms of the earth, and you, you might be deaf to all the praises that were being shouted towards its throne, and your heart be impervious to all the influences going out from its center of power. You might be living in the very kingdom of heaven itself, in earthly presence, and be as far from its actual presence as the farthest star from the earth we walk on. That was the doctrine taught by Jesus. That was an astounding blow to that man’s religious consciousness at that point in his career; but it was the very thing he needed. No farther step was possible in understanding Jesus, in approaching the Kingdom of God, until Nicodemus’s own heart should deal frankly, deal earnestly, deal successfully with that first condition which Jesus lays down, “Except a man be born again, he can not see the Kingdom of God”,—far less, “enter into it”, as He says a few verses farther on.

That is the first thing Jesus teaches him. Then, according to John, He goes on to teach him concerning Himself. It is very hard to tell in John’s Gospel exactly where history ends and where comment begins, and whether the words he writes down are to be understood as words attributed by him to Jesus, or words that he draws out of the teaching of Jesus, explaining and developing it. This passage (from v. 14 to v. 21) illustrates the difficulty. These words, I believe were intended to give us the substance of the teaching of Jesus, which is this: That Jesus, Himself, is the one person with whom Nicodemus must deal, if he would have anything to do with that kingdom. He, in fact, tells that man, who is one of the most powerful men of his day in the whole country, tells him frankly, “Unless you come into right relations with Me, the door is shut, the kingdom is unattainable, invisible. You can not enter into it, you can not see it, until you have dealings with the King, who speaks to you”.

These, then, are the two main points that Jesus Christ compels Nicodemus to consider. The one concerns himself inwardly. The other concerns Another and his relation to that Other. The one is that a change must come upon his own inner nature, and that change must be wrought by God. The other is that he must come into a changed relation with God through that Person, outside and above himself, even Jesus Christ.

Now, there are those, of course, in every age, who feel, as Nicodemus

must have felt at first,—as the young ruler felt at first, when the same demand was made upon him,—that it is an extraordinary and an inadmissible assertion that every man, in order to get into heaven, to get into the Kingdom of God, must undergo a change so momentous, that it can only be described by Jesus Himself, as “Being born again”. Time after time in the history,—not of the world, for the self-satisfied, irreligious worldling always denies that,—but in the history of the Christian church itself, movements have come which have had the denial of this for their mainspring. I do not know anything more interesting or more entertaining here than certain chapters of Professor Barrett Wendell’s “Literature of America”. Turn to his chapter on intellectualism in New England and the chapter on transcendentalism in Boston, especially in relation to literature. Some of the freshest and most epigrammatic reading I have found for some time in new books, has been found in these chapters. Professor Wendell puts his finger upon the real spring of literary and religious life in New England in the beginning and in the middle of the last century. As a matter of fact, New Englanders had been living shut up in a corner, away from the main currents of history for a number of generations. They were the direct descendants of the finest stock that could be, Puritan stock, on its religious and moral side. There were not many people that were too rich and not many people that were too poor. They were all on somewhat of a social equality. They had the advantages of good education, of religious training, of quiet and average prosperity in the things of this world, the very conditions of life that would make for continual satisfaction and peace. The result was the development of an average society which was, perhaps, more moral than any the world has seen anywhere else. And, therefore, a sort of consciousness of excellence arose, out of which they judged even religion itself, a consciousness of excellence that led them to turn round upon the doctrines of the Puritan fathers, the very doctrines that made them what they were, and at last condemn them and pass them by. Professor Wendell puts the feeling, the spirit that was wide-spread in New England at that time in a number of different paragraphs from which I will take these sentences: “Human nature is good. You are made right. Mind, body, soul, spirit are all made right. Obey yourself and you need have no fear. All things worth serious and earnest thought transcend human spirit, but a trustworthy clue to them is to be found in the unfathomable excellence of human minds, souls and spirits”.

Now, this “unfathomable excellence” that some of them were conscious of possessing, not as individuals but as members of a society, was something like that “unfathomable excellence” of religious consciousness and moral life which Jesus found possessed by large numbers of the Pharisees of His day. And Jesus, to one of the most excellent of these, one of the most really excellent individuals among them, comes down with that tremendous blow, “You must be born again”. It is an assertion that goes deep into the heart of things; Jesus shows how deep it goes when He says, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh”; the natural flow of life down the



race history "is flesh". "That which you would call spirit, spiritual in human experience, must come from spirit; it must come out of the Spirit of God Himself".

Religion is not flesh growing up into spirit. Religion is the spirit coming down into the flesh. Religion is not man scaling the ladder boldly, breaking the gates of heaven down and advancing, as Ingersoll said he would advance, bravely to the foot of the throne. Religion, the Christian religion, is God coming from the throne down the ladder, on which angels ascend and descend, coming down to man, taking hold of human nature. The Kingdom of God comes to human life as the God of life came to a world of mechanical or chemical dust,—from above. The Kingdom of God comes and takes hold of human nature, conscious, living, intelligent, as intelligence came and took hold of the dull, dead life of the plant world—from above. The spirit of the Eternal God, Jesus Christ said, must come, if any man would enter that kingdom, to seize that man and lead him in. Only that which is of the spirit can be spiritual.

2. And now, let us look at the opposite. Here there comes to Jesus a woman whose moral need is confessed and open. She can not think, like Nicodemus, that she is fit for the presence of God, just as she is. Poor Nicodemus, with his eyes unopened, thought that as he was he might see God, he might enter the kingdom. But poor Nicodemus must be taught by Jesus that, until his eyes were opened, he could not see God; until his heart was changed, he could not enter the kingdom. But this woman, are her eyes opened? Are her feet moving towards that kingdom? Almost the last thing she is thinking of is religion, and the very last thing she is thinking of is righteousness. She is not there on a religious errand. She is not there expectant of a moral blessing. She is there just because she has put off and put off coming for water, until she had to do so in the very heat of the day. For her slothful, indolent life always ends in inconvenience for herself, and, instead of coming out when others did, she waited, either lazy or ashamed, until the others had gone back to town. And under the burning sun she came out alone, and found another Sunlight at the well.

When Jesus arouses her curiosity, she expresses her surprise. He begins at the root of the matter. He says, "If you had known who was speaking to you, you would have asked Him for water and He would have given you living water". She could not understand this saying, of course, but Jesus was the most perfect Teacher which the world ever saw. You can never have success in teaching until you have personal interest aroused, and personal interest involves some measure of curiosity. He arouses, therefore, her curiosity and personal interest by the very form of the words in which He makes His most wonderful declaration. He says to that woman, "I could give you living water". And still, because she is confused among the symbols of things, she tauntingly laughs and says, "You have nothing to draw with, and the well is now very deep. How can you do that? Are you greater than Jacob, our father?" She boasted of the antiquity of the well, and the honor of the man who had given it to the

history of her people for so many hundreds and hundreds of years. Jesus, coming a little closer to the matter, says to her that this water which He is speaking of is not the kind which she is thinking of, and, therefore, the well is not one that can be compared with that of Jacob. "Everyone that drinketh of this water shall thirst again",—and oh, how she knows that. How she wishes that she and they of her household did not get thirsty so quickly, so that she would not have to come out so often to draw this water in the heat of the day,—“but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, and the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water, springing up into eternal life”. She does not understand that, and Jesus knows it. He is still quickening her curiosity and leading her on and on. She thinks, “What a strange man is this, talking about having a well of water inside oneself, springing up into everlasting life? What strange words are these!” And yet there is something so earnest, so authoritative, in the tone of the Speaker that she presses on to ask further questions and to get into the heart of the meaning of this strange Jew, who not only speaks to a woman, contrary to all etiquette, but even to a Samaritan woman, contrary to all national prejudices.

When the woman says to Him, with laughter still in her voice, without much earnestness, and yet beginning perhaps to be half shy, as if in the presence of an Authority she had not expected, “Give me this water”, Jesus deals another astounding blow. “Go, call thy husband and come hither”. Go and bring him into my presence! And she knows, after a few instances more, that He knows more about her than she did herself. She has been brought right down from considerations of etiquette and from enigmatic words into the heart of the moral universe. Being there she no doubt is asking herself now more rapidly than she can speak,—you all know how you ask questions in your heart faster than your lips can utter them in the intensity of your soul at some great crisis,—she is asking questions that never can be uttered, faster, faster, about Him and her, and her past and the future, and the kind of woman that stands there, and how she could stand before that Face, if that other man was with her. Then when she tries to turn the conversation aside to sectarian controversies about worship, because she perceived that He was a prophet, Jesus leads her mind up to heights unreachd by human minds before, in all the history of man's climbing search for God.

To that poor woman, now feeling forlorn and ashamed, astounded by this blow that has come upon her, Jesus speaks of God in phrases sublime and of eternal glory. “God is Spirit”, He says, and from that word to that degraded woman light pours upon us all today. He had not said “Father” to Nicodemus, but He says “Father” to the woman at the well. “Father” is the great key-word that He would employ when He speaks to souls like hers, to consciences working like that conscience now, in hearts like that heart. “The Father”. Oh, what wealth of good tidings flows from that name, as it falls from His lips! She never heard it applied to God in all her life. She never dreamed that the Everlasting Jehovah, whom Samari-

tan and Jew alike worshipped and dreaded, could be named by any individual as "Father". And here, One whom she feels to be a prophet, One whom she recognizes as speaking from God, with that instinctive recognition of the soul that is surer than anything else, He speaks to her of that God, as "Father". He says, "The Father does not care whether you pray in that mountain there, or whether you pray at Jerusalem, from which I come. The Father does not care for place and time. The Father cares for spirit and heart and truth. It is a question of whether you kneel down in the world of truth, not in the world of matter; whether you kneel down in spirit and in faith, not whether you kneel down in ceremony and in fear. The question is not whether you kneel down to speak in the language of the Samaritan or Jews. The question is whether the words go to Him out of your heart, for the Father seeketh the sincere to worship Him".

And then, thinking with a new eagerness, but shrinking from the immediate demands which God's Fatherhood at once makes on her, she seeks postponement by reference to the Messiah, who will clear up all these difficulties for her. "There is One coming, some day, who will make it all plain; the Jews are expecting Him, the Samaritans are expecting Him; and it does not matter whether He comes into Samaria or Jerusalem, He will make it all clear; He will solve all doubts". She can not dispute with Him as to whether He is preaching orthodoxy or heterodoxy; she will not proceed into these mysteries farther; but she says, "All the same I hope, like the rest of my people, for the Messiah. When He comes He will make it all plain and then—" "I that speak unto thee am He"!

Jesus has disclosed to that woman, more explicitly than to anyone else, the great mystery of His person. He is the Messiah. He is the explainer of all things. What He has been saying to her, promising to her, of the well of water that He could strike from the rock of her hard heart, hardened by a life of sin, He has said because He is the Messiah. He can make the water of life spring up even in that heart unto everlasting life.

Jesus, then, has with this woman proceeded upon the opposite plan from that adopted in relation to Nicodemus and reached the same point. Nicodemus had not committed gross sins, and, like the young ruler was living in the self-satisfaction of what his people would call a clean life; as touching the law, blameless, and yet Jesus says that "he must be born again". His moral need was deeper than he ever dreamed. With that woman, whose moral need was very evident to herself and to all, He takes it all for granted. He does not require to prove to her that she needs the great change. The change will come to *her* when she calls God her Father, on the authority of Jesus the Messiah.

So varied and so sure is the way of Jesus with the souls of men. How dare we ask Him to lead any two persons alike, when here, in the Gospel of John it is shown so plainly that He treats people in such opposite ways to reach the same result?

At which end have you been living? At which end does your conscience find you this morning? Can you sit here in this church of God and



say,—“I am like Nicodemus. I do not feel that I have committed any great crime, that I have any great shame upon my life; and that is one of my difficulties about religion”? The message of Christ, I take it, to you and to all of such a class is this: Nevertheless, if you want to enter the Kingdom of the Spirit, the Spirit of God must come down upon you, and when that Spirit touches your heart the change will be so great that you yourself will say, “It is a being born again”. Are you ready to face it? Your moral need, however good you be, is greater than you know, and when that Spirit has touched your heart, He will wake up a sense, even of sin, that you never dreamed it possible that you could have. Perhaps there is some one sitting here who is conscious of having done great wrong against conscience in some direction in the past, the long past or the near past. To you the message of Christ is just that which He gave to the woman. Your heart can only be cleansed, that open sore have the festering poison washed away with living water. There is a spiritual antiseptic for the wounds of the heart, and it is given by the Spirit of God. When that comes washing through the heart, the horrid abscess is cleansed and the healing is begun. Will you all, shall we all, wherever Christ finds us, shall we all unite in saying, “Good or bad hitherto, at the top or the bottom of the scale, we all meet, meet in one great need, meet in one earnest prayer, meet in one living trust in God the Father, through Jesus Christ, the Son of God”?

## \* THE PERSONAL EQUATION OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

BY REV. FREDERIC PALMER, M. A.,

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(ST. JOHN 20:31.)

"These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name".

A brisk discussion took place some years ago as to whether a novel should have a purpose. "See the inartistic, namby-pamby stuff", said the one party, "which is produced when your novelist tries to advocate temperance or social reform or some theory about women. He pretends to come open-handed, but all the time he is keeping one hand behind him, and all the time you can see that he is doing so, and it makes him awkward and you disgusted. You demand to have your pill and your sugar separately". "Well", says the other party, "the thing, it is true, may be done badly, but without a purpose your novel degenerates into a newspaper. You merely bind together some scenes and conversations and call them a story, but they are a bundle of sketches with no unity. They are not even a chronicle, for that has in it a unifying thread of time. True art will no doubt keep a purpose where it is in well-ordered life, not thrusting itself forward in long-haired men and short-haired women, but hidden, yet dominant in every act and word. A novel without a purpose is like a life without a career. In order to be a story it must have something to say. Merely to record facts without pointing out their significance, is to be simply a car conductor's bell-register".

A recent writer in the "London Spectator" has been extending this view to history. It is impossible, he maintains, for true history to be uncolored. Take, on the one hand, the historian who aims to show events in the bare, cold light of science, and, on the other, one who is so much interested in a man or a cause that he follows the leading of this and sees events in its light, and you are more likely to learn the real state of affairs through the latter than through the former. For in the latter case the historian's "control" as the Spiritualists would say, can be seen, generally plainly seen, and its influence allowed for; while in the former case the historian has not sympathy enough with his man or his time to enable his imagination to reconstruct its inner life. For it is imagination that must take data and rebuild the past. The copying, or even the sifting, of records is not sufficient. To fill the dry bones of the past with life requires almost as much creative power as to shape life out of the duties and events of the present.

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\* Delivered at the Fourth Conference, held at Grace Episcopal Church, January 13, 1904.

Both demand a hold upon ideals and a constant adjustment of facts to them. And this necessitates imagination. Imagination has its dangers, its tendencies to romance and to preaching, but it has its compensations. Like oxen, it makes a muss and also wealth. "Where no oxen are, the crib is clean; but much labor is with the strength of the ox".

Such considerations occur to us as we consider the Gospel of St. John, especially its differences from the Synoptic Gospels. And in no part of it are these differences more apparent than in the chapters from the fifth to the eleventh. Compare this section with almost any part of the Gospel of St. Mark, for example. The latter is comparatively simple of thought, not analytic, not theologic. There is an atmosphere about it that is fresh, glad, young. You can see the blue Lake sparkling in the morning sunshine, and the golden fields of Galilee, rich with lilies and vocal with birds. It is concerned with facts ungarnished, unrelated to any scheme of thought. The utterances of Jesus in it are deep and spiritual, but there is in them no touch of mysticism; they say little about His nature, or His relation to man or God.

On the other hand, the tone of the Fourth Gospel is mature, meditative, mystical. The life it reflects is subtle and complex. It is full of theology. The events it narrates are given apparently not so much for their historical value as for a purpose, a purpose of instruction and edification. It appears as if aiming to set forth and illustrate a theory. Its gaze is dreamy, far-distant, so far that on its horizon the line between earth and heaven is indistinguishable. The Synoptic Gospels are full of brief, epigrammatic sayings of Jesus, and of stories of His, illustrating the Kingdom of God. The Fourth Gospel, with one possible exception, contains no parable, and the discourses of Jesus in it are involved in style, and are occupied with setting forth the spiritual relations of men to Him and His relations to His Father. The Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel are not merely different; they are in some respects contradictory. In the Fourth Gospel there is no development in the history of Jesus' public ministry. His Messiahship is at once announced by John the Baptist, recognized by the disciples, and exhibited to the multitudes assembled at Jerusalem. On the other hand, in the Synoptic Gospels His Messianic character is unfolded only gradually. Those who discover it are bidden to keep it concealed. His closest disciples are slow to recognize it, and it is openly announced only at the close of His career. Again, the character of the life is different which the followers of Christ will share through their connection with Him. In the first three Gospels it is a blessed existence in some distant sphere in the future. The present is only preparatory to it, for this life will pass away before the Kingdom of Heaven will begin.

In the Fourth Gospel the reward of the followers of Christ is eternal life; and this is conceived not so much as waiting upon a future day as a matter of here and now, for it consists of union of spirit with Him. The Christ of St. Luke places the resurrection and the moral assessment of life far distant at the world's end. St. John makes the Christ repudiate this



view, and declare that He is Himself the resurrection and the life, and that belief in Him carries life with it immediately.

Such differences and contrarieties must spring from a difference of view in the writers. They must have regarded Jesus differently, and they must have had different aims in writing. To examine the aim of each of the first three writers is not possible to-day. But in case of the author of the Fourth Gospel we cannot but suspect before we reach the end of his book that he has a special purpose; and when we reach the last chapter but one we find it distinctly stated. "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through His name". His work, then, is not a biography of Jesus, not a history of the events of His time; but the author aimed to demonstrate that Jesus was the Messiah and the Son of God, and this not so much for intellectual conviction as for spiritual edification. He alone speculates on the relation of Jesus to the Almighty Creator. He alone sees in Him the representative in human conditions of a side of God's nature which forever existed. The Synoptists exhibit Jesus as preaching the truth. The Fourth Evangelist regards Jesus as being Himself the Truth, the eternal Thought and Reasonableness of God. It is not merely the case with him, as with the others, that following Christ's precepts will result in a life which exemplifies that of Jesus; but with him, Jesus is Life itself, all that gives wealth, joy, and worth to existence. Christ is not only an objective, historic being who once lived and died, but He is the subjective principle of life within the soul. The First and Third Evangelists give traditions of the birth of Jesus, though even they ignore them afterwards and sometimes contradict them. The Second Evangelist hears the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the voice of John the Baptist. But the Fourth Evangelist could have nothing to do with traditions of the birth of Jesus, for to him the history of Christ went back through the ages and began in the beginning with God.

When we have apprehended how widely different the portrait of Jesus is which is given in the Fourth Gospel from that of the other three, we hastily turn and ask, "Is it authentic? How far does it represent the real Jesus of Nazareth, or how far was it owing to the peculiarities of the author, whoever he was? This special tinge which the Fourth Gospel has throughout, is that the artist's coloring, or is the portrait trustworthy? May we assume the historic character of the Gospel?"

I think we must answer in some respects, No. When an author disclaims the writing of history, we may not hold him to historic accuracy. He has his face set in another direction. Moreover—and this applies to other parts of the Bible as well—the conditions of what we know as historic accuracy did not then exist. There were no means of making immediate and exact reports of conversations or events. When recorded afterwards, it was their substance which the writer endeavored to embody, not their form. The discourses of historic persons in ancient writings, for example, are rarely authentic in form. The author takes certain utterances which may have

been genuine or certain ideas appropriate to the occasion, and weaves from them a speech which he puts into the mouth of the one he is describing. This is noticeable in some of the speeches in the Book of the Acts. Tertullus, a noted orator, is hired to conduct the case of the Jews against Paul. To justify engaging a professional advocate, the speech must have been a long one. It takes less than one minute to read it. The part of a long and weighty speech which would be apt to be retained would naturally be the opening rather than the after-parts; and in the Acts the preamble of this speech occupies almost half of the whole. Such an instance shows that in the Bible, as in other ancient writings, speeches especially were freely treated. And this we must bear in mind in considering the speeches of Jesus given in the section from the fifth to the eleventh chapters of the Fourth Gospel. It adds to the improbability of their stenographic accuracy that the style of them is wholly different from the utterances of Jesus as given in the other Gospels. The brief, pithy sentences and vital metaphors which the earlier Gospels ascribe to Him, all bear one sharp and individual stamp; but these are widely different from the close involutions of argument of the Fourth Gospel and the intricacies of metaphysical thought underlying them. And what is true of historic data and of style, may be also true in some respects of the underlying theology, for it partly is conditioned by them. Was this theologic view of Jesus a peculiarity of the author, or was Jesus in reality the mystic being here portrayed?

The evidence to decide this must be largely internal; that is, we must take features which seem unquestionably historic and see whether others which are asserted harmonize with them. If they do not melt into a unity, the presumption is that they were inaccurately reported or come from the peculiarities of the author.

In our judgment of the authenticity of the portrait of Jesus given in the Fourth Gospel, we shall consider whether its special features are harmonious with the best type found elsewhere.

Now there is another source of information with regard to Jesus besides the Gospels. Half a century at least before the writing of the Fourth Gospel, and a quarter-century or so before the earliest of any of our four, St. Paul began sending epistles to his distant friends. He made no attempt to describe the events of the life of Jesus, for he was but little interested in them; but Jesus' character impressed him profoundly. Now it is most significant that with him, too, as well as with the author of the Fourth Gospel, it is the subjective, spiritual side of Christ with which he is mainly concerned; it is Christ's part in the great world-process of union between God and man. He contemplates Jesus as embodying the human side of God and the divine side of man. "Christ" with him has passed from a title of Jesus of Nazareth to a designation of the ideal man, the consummation of all that is best in the world, the typical instance of the possibilities of the soul and of the human race. He is the spiritual expression of humanity. He is the complete embodiment of God under human conditions. At one time St Paul refers to Jesus as a historic person who

lived and died at Jerusalem. At another time Christ is a spiritual being, but external to the soul, the giver of all its true life. Again He is within the soul, its very life and essence. From one to another of these great conceptions he hurries, as it is now this, now that aspect which attracts his attention at the time. They tangle his thought into inextricable sentences. The mystery of the mingling of human and divine in the soul of the individual and in the race so overcomes him that he bursts out into poetry and a torrent of prepositions: "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen".

The similarity of these two conceptions, of course, suggests the question whether the later was borrowed from the earlier. But this is a question of little importance. Whether the Fourth Evangelist came across this view in his travels among those churches of Asia which St. Paul had founded; whether it was struck out in his conflict with Gnostic speculation as the only method of reconciling the infinity of God with the finiteness and evil of the world; or whether it came to him after long years of quiet meditation as the necessary development of certain germs of character he had seen or learned of in Jesus of Nazareth; this is of secondary importance. The chief thing is that he deliberately adopted it, endorsed it, and made it the basis of his portrait of his Master.

Portrait—that is the word we must keep in mind in considering this Gospel. It is not a photograph of Jesus. How do a portrait and a photograph differ? The one gives the fact of the moment and from one point of view. Place yourself at the camera and put your sitter in a given position, and this photograph is precisely what you see. It is the scientifically correct record of these particular conditions. But as a complete report of the man it may be gravely inaccurate. "He never takes well", we say of this or that person, "his face has so much expression". Where a subject is complex, the photograph, by recording only one aspect, may convey an absolutely false impression. But the portrait-painter endeavors to show the full, the real man. The greatness of a Rembrandt or a Watts portrait does not lie in the fact that it tells us of what color the subject's eyes were or what kind of a coat he wore. We care very little whether the artist was historically accurate in these details or not. But we stand in amazement at seeing a human soul gazing at us from the canvas—a soul calm or frivolous, humorous, vain, or profound. It is the man himself that we see; not his clothes, not his appearance at one time or under special circumstances, but the composite, complete man. Before the artist can create his likeness he must create *him*. The sitter presents himself before the artist's judgment-seat and the artist gives sentence upon him with every stroke of his brush. "Your character is thus and so. You are a coward here, a hero there. Thus I strip off all accidentals of time and circumstances, and behold, your real self stands revealed". It must require much confidence to have one's portrait painted by a great artist.

It is such a likeness of Christ that the Fourth Gospel gives us. St. Mark, with his loving eye for details, records this and that circumstance



which we welcome as furnishing the fact-basis for our conception of our Lord. And then comes St. John; and upon this background he paints so wonderfully that we behold the light of the knowledge of the glory of God beaming forth in the face of Jesus Christ. It is a presumption in behalf of the accuracy of His portrait that it is not a summary of facts, but it is the impression which Christ made as a whole upon an artist of constructive imagination and profound spiritual insight. The greatness of the character thus revealed, is, it is true, not of itself a proof of its historic accuracy. Moving as it is, it might yet be no revelation of the historic Jesus, but a product merely of the writer's lofty imagination. But when we see that the figure it presents is the Jesus of the Synoptists, raised to a higher degree of spiritual development; when we see this conception buttressed by the first Epistle of St. John and the later Epistles of St. Paul; then we feel we have a right to reckon as evidence for its accuracy its mastery over our souls and its call upon our worship; then we exclaim, "My Lord must have been nothing less than that". We recognize that the author has attained his purpose. "These things", he said, "are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through His name". Life comes to us through the name he has written large.

See it there—his conception—the Incarnation—opening to its wealth of meaning in the Fourth Gospel. If we had possessed no more than the first three Gospels, we should have had a wonderful Christ, an example and an inspiration. But He would have been a historic being only; we should have had no warrant for identifying Him with the divine life of our souls, dwelling with us and abiding in us. But the Christ of the Fourth Gospel is the connecting link between the outward and the inward, between the historic and the spiritual. He is the representative in bodily conditions, in terms of time and space, of that human side which existed forever in the nature of God. The life of Jesus was in time; but the divine sonship, the existence in God of a human side, was independent of time and humanity, being eternal. This was authentically exhibited in Jesus of Nazareth. Not that He is Himself the Almighty, for neither in this Gospel nor elsewhere in the New Testament is it asserted as a theological proposition that Jesus is God. But He is the representative of God. If God had lived, a man on earth, He would have done just as Jesus did. He showed thought and love and goodness as existing forever in the bosom of the Father, and constituting in Him the ground of connection with humanity. And, on the other hand, He showed this same goodness and thought and love as the true nature of men, and constituting in them the ground of union with God. He brought God down to men, and raised men up to God. And as He is God's representative, so whatsoever things in the world are true, pure, just, lovely, these are His representatives. In Him is life, and the life is the light of men. The soul of the world, all the calls to noble desire, all that makes life worth living, this is the presence of the Spirit of Christ. It is such a conception of Jesus as this that is the characteristic gift to us of the Fourth Gospel.

The question is sometimes asked, "How do we know that Jesus will not be superseded in that unique position which the Gospel of John assigns Him, just as He Himself superseded the prophets which were before Him?" Or, to put it in spiritual language, "How do we know that He is God's only Son?" Certainly He is not such in the sense that God has no other sons; for we too are sons of God as really as was Jesus. But certainly He is, in the sense that His revelation of God is unique and final. However this may be further developed—and St. Paul points out how one may "fill up the measure of the sufferings of Christ"—He cannot be superseded. Development must consist in applying in new departments this same idea of God which Christ set forth. This renewal of the Incarnation is the Christian's path in every age for following his Master. And in every noble man or woman we have known we see a partial incarnation of Christ. But its fundamental lines cannot be changed. For the united Christian consciousness, perhaps one may say, the consciousness of the whole world, asserts that Christ's conception of God is the deepest, the highest, the truest, and therefore the ultimate conception. There are some things in which finality has been reached. Goodness will undoubtedly show itself differently under different conditions; but our idea of the nature of goodness can never be reversed. So Christ's conception of God may be amplified, but it can never be altered. It is final. He is the only-begotten Son of the Father.

Belief in God depends more upon moral than intellectual grounds. It is founded upon the insistence of the soul that the highest intellectual and moral ideal shall be real. The cogency of this demand will therefore be in proportion to the urgency with which the moral pressure is felt. So belief in the authenticity of St. John's conception of Christ will depend largely upon whether such a conception is demanded by one's spiritual nature. To some the figure which appears in the Synoptists may be a sufficient explanation of the person of Christ and of the way of their own approach to God; for, whatever view is taken, these are inevitably bound together. Others, to whom it seems that there must of necessity have been a human side in God from all eternity, that this must of necessity have become at some time embodied as completely as is possible under human conditions, that this ideal must stand in vital connection with the life of their own souls today—such will recognize in the portrait of Christ, drawn by the author of the Fourth Gospel with the purpose of presenting to the soul its master, features intrinsically probable as those of the historic Jesus of Nazareth, and essential to the Saviour of the world.

## \* THE AUTHOR OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

BY REV. CLARK S. BEARDSLEE, D. D.,

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Many remarks, in apology and explanation, call for utterance as I take up this much-contended theme. But for these there is now no time or room. You good people will appreciate what such remarks should be, and when they would be in place.

This one thing needs, however, to be said, and I hope it will offend no one. It is not going to be my primary purpose to name the author of this Gospel, or to tell where he lived, or to intimate his ancestry or training.

Rather, I am going to seek to gain some knowledge about this author by studying his work. This Fourth Gospel is some man's monument. It must of necessity embody some evidences and disclosures of his personal qualities. In some true sense the author's portrait must be outlined in his work. His heart must be beating there, if only our fingers are deft enough to find its pulse. His eye must be glowing there continually, if only our sight is keen enough to catch its light. His immortal being must leave traces through his wonderful work, if only our immortal spirits have the requisite affinity for sharing in his fellowship. Somewhere within this Fourth Gospel the man who gave it shape stands beckoning toward our eye. As we read these chapters, the very presence and person of their original penman stand nearer than we think. And we may cherish the precious confidence that main plain outlines of his noble form can never be effaced. Where this Gospel stands, its author may be seen immediately.

Here open grand suggestions. At best, all that can be said here will have to be mere suggestion.

In the first place, people are always saying that this Fourth Gospel is so unlike the other three. True. And precisely here this author comes to view. He is unlike those other men. He seems to have had his attention fastened upon a special round of facts in the Master's life. And this proneness of his toward just these things, if only we can it well, is deep and clear with meaning. Those other men were mainly held by scenes in Galilee. This man was mainly held by scenes in Judah. Here is a dominant note. And in this dominant note ring echoes of the very voice of him who brings this closing testimony to our ears.

And for one feature of our author it shows that he was *selective*. He omitted hosts of facts. He chose with carefulness, just these few. Ponder that remark of his in 20:30, 31: "Many *other* signs did Jesus \* \* \*

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\* Delivered at the Eighth Conference, held at All Saints Memorial Church, May 11, 1904.



But *these* are written, etc.". Selection. Definite selection. Resolute selection. There rings a purpose, a thoughtful purpose. This yields no hint of the author's name, to be sure. But it introduces us intimately to his inner mind. He is no easy rover. He prattles no distracted and distracting speech. He can pick and weigh and lock together and concentrate what he treats and what he says. Think of this. It shows a master instantly.

Then see his motive: "These are written that ye may believe". *That ye may believe*. Faith. Walk around that word. Dig under it. Look within it. Trace it to its origin. Who said that? Here is a man who aims to engender faith. That means truth. And truth that stands clear, and rests firm. There looms a sublime proposition. It is an appeal to man's intelligence. It is girt with mighty confidence. It is strong with an unvarying patience. Think into it. There rings a sovereign. No finer, kinglier challenge could be made by any man. The man who poised these two verses on the apex of his work was a master-builder. Keep thinking of this. "That ye may believe". The man who utters that brief phrase, as it is uttered by this author, needs to hold a steady footing, needs to have his vision clear, his conviction sure, and the parts of his total theme well arranged, as he voices a challenge like that. No outburst of his being could be more dignified, no undertaking could require a grander momentum, no proposition could show a finer personal character, or attest a loftier ambition.

Read those two verses over and over. More features of the author are resting there than you suspect. Feel the throbbing of his heart as he mentions "Jesus". See whither his fancy soars as he writes down "Christ". Follow up the far rangings of his thought as he carves that phrase, "The Son of God". Get the posture and energy of this man as he bows down over his great endeavor and writes: "These things I have set down in writing that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye may have life in His name". Set every phrase apart. Scan every word. Then combine the whole. Press into this. You are drawing near the warm presence of the very man you seek.

Then put close beside these verses those verses with which the Gospel opens. Explore the grand interior of that word "Word". There shines a precious stone. None finer was ever found in all the Orient. The "Word", *i. e.*, the very voice of reason, and the very light of revelation. Will you properly inspect those terms? Then hear that declaration about the "Word": It "was in the beginning". This reasoned revelation, this revealed reason is eternal. What an affirmation! So examine the spaces and masses which bulk and spread so marvelously in that Prologue. The man who penned that Prologue was a man of vision and a man of thought. He had seen, and he had pondered. It was a master who framed those ponderous words together. There is in that Prologue a resumé of the earthly life of Christ, a deep reach into His eternity, an outline of an ultimate metaphysics, a true philosophy, a thumbnail compend of theology, and an ample base for perfect ethics. These are superlative affirmations,

and only affirmations, to be sure. Time fails to show their warrant. But test them. Work them out. And again you will begin to be finely aware of the very presence of the man who penned this Gospel.

Then meditate for a little upon the phrase, "Without Him was not anything made that was made". Stop right here. What ever moved this author to coin this claim? Think of this. Here is another disclosure of himself. He was a watchful, thoughtful man. He was a man of vision and reason. For example: He saw Jesus turn the water into wine. He saw Jesus feed the 5,000 men. Just such scenes as these were seen by all the other men. But this man pondered as he gazed. He thought. And as he pondered, he was led to see and say, "Lo, here is the Creator".

Study in a similar way that other phrase: "I am the light of the world". Or this: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men". How did that idea and figure of *light* get so firm a place in this Fourth Gospel? It is another mark and impress of its author. He saw Jesus deal with men. He heard Him talk. He saw violence fly against Him, and observed the Master's plain and strong and mild replies. And as he saw he thought. And as he thought he said: "Lo, here is reason streaming into human minds. Here is original and ultimate instruction. Here is the light that lighteth every man coming into the world". Do you see? The man who penned those words was a closely watchful, deeply thoughtful, finely docile, truly original mind. Suppose it be allowed that man cannot be sure about his name or nature, place or training or daily whereabouts. Despite all that ignorance, we may know this man. He lives and speaks right before our eyes.

And I would say that these last mentioned instances are characteristic of this Gospel and this man. The other Gospels record similar deeds of Christ. But they do nothing more. But this man, who pens this fourth account, takes from those common actions a chosen few, and thinks of them, and grows into them, and gets the weight of them, and sees their size, and penetrates to their philosophy. He peers and ponders till he sees them whole, till he finds their meaning, till he stands within eternity. Such was the man who wrote this Gospel.

Another introduction to this author can be gained by noting all he says about the Holy Spirit. In this regard he stands grandly unique. Once Jesus said: "If any thirst, let him come unto Me and drink, and out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water". The author of this Gospel caught that great saying and wrote it down. And he knew well what he was doing. And then he got another saying,—that one, uttered when Thomas was absent, where Jesus breathed on them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost". The author of this Gospel watched that little drama through and made a record of it. And in those wonderful conferences of Jesus and His friends in chapters 14-16, he has put down repeatedly at the sharp point of his accurate pen the Lord's allusions to the Spirit. Mind this. This author made a note of all of them and put them in his book. Read them over and over if you really seek to know this man. For here is precious aid, I feel

sure. The author of this Fourth Gospel had deep conceptions of what Jesus meant and did when He promised and imparted the Holy Ghost. The mighty energies of that infinite Holy Spirit of wisdom and grace and consolation wrought freely and for long upon his plastic nature, he freely submitting all the while to the silent transformation, until its fruitage ripened in this golden record which we read. Through that inworking Spirit, all the Master's word and life were inwrought into this author's being. And this Gospel is the living issue. The Gospel unfolds the author just as truly as it unfolds the Christ. And I will put in right here that, if I know at all what Christ's Gospel actually is, it is in this Fourth Gospel. And it is all here. And in its record is the very soul of the Christian honor of its author. To the very core it is genuine, authentic, true. The penman of these paragraphs was inspired. The Holy Spirit, the boon of Christ, reigned within his life and work. He drank deep draughts from the spring of life, and hence he wrote this Gospel.

Another sign of who and what he is appears in that same scene when Thomas was away. Read it through and get the drift of that statement of the Lord: "As the Father hath sent Me, so do I send you". There is apostleship. Tarry here till you get the force and outlook of that word. Then test this Gospel by that thought. Read also this: "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, etc.". The man who wrote this book was a man who felt that mission. His impulse hailed from Christ and God, and it aimed at all humanity. If ever an apostle of Christ has been seen by men, he is the author of this book. This is really a taking clue to his identity. And it runs all through this Fourth Gospel, if there is any honor in it.

Now study the relation of events and discourses in this Gospel. Remember the events—those miracles, those criticisms and challenges—and then remember the addresses that follow. For example take chapters 5 and 6. Here is a phenomenon of which much is being made. Study this. Men say the discourses wander and get lost in unearthly metaphysics. But look. See how simple those discourses are. They are profound, indeed. Yes. But they are simple. And they do grow out of the event. They really do. They are expository of the inner meaning of the event. They are comments, a master's comments. Examine this. You are as capable of doing this as anyone. You search and see. The fact is, event and discourse cohere. One produces the other. One rises from the other, simply, naturally.

What does this mean touching the author? Why, it means that in the writer of this Gospel, we have a man who hung about Christ with an exquisite insight and attentiveness, and that he was peculiarly prone to be close by the Lord when He was drawing eternal meanings out of common things. Here is a disciple who saw the Saviour's philosophy of things.

Test this by an honest study of the word "Son" in 5:19, and "love" in 5:20, and "bread" in 6:33. Test it in that ninth chapter. Study into these suggestions. Jesus did deep thinking all along there. Follow it if you can. Keep your hold of the event. Traverse through its discourse and



you will find a marvelous characteristic of this author. He can take an item that is in itself an incident, such as the evangelists would merely name, and show how Jesus' mind adjusted itself to that item's deepest bearings.

Now John is full of this sort of thing. Do not refuse to study it out. Get into his simplicity. Get into his profundity. The fact is, this writer stands at once the friend and the follower, the peer and the leader of the plainest and the most finished men of our race. He may be classed, and properly classed among the stoics and the gnostics, the artists and the rustics of the ages. Wonderfully plain, wonderfully deep. I praise heaven that there was one who had the eye to see the Messiah's discernment of the mighty meanings in common things.

One could well spend a whole afternoon verifying this. I have alluded to that impotent man in John 5. There is a cure just such as you find in the other Gospels without a comment. Its Sabbath desecration, too, is similar to repeated synoptic scenes. There is an independent, authoritative act of love. Now see how deep thoughts unfold. Out of the cure, an allusion to the Sabbath. Out of that, an allusion to the Father. Out of that, some words about the Son. Out of that, some words about Love. Out of that, some words about Life and Judgment. Out of that, some words about Faith, and so on. Now think; whither have you run? From that poor, impotent man by the pool, you have almost instantly traversed infinite realms, until at the end you stand face to face with the ultimate realities of personal being in God and man alike. Here is a sublime and impressive trait of the author of this work.

Another study worth the while of any man is the search to see how many sides, how many different sides of the Master this author has defined. It is a most wonderful study. But there is no room for its examination here.

Still another phase of this Gospel, reflecting finely on the author's qualities, is its quality as a piece of literature. There is high art here, art of the finest type,—literary art. Look at it as a drama. Study its personnel. Study its scenery. Study it as a tragedy. Mark its unity.

Then try to grasp the whole as a unified portrait of Christ. You know it is possibly this same author that drew that picture of Christ in the closing book of our canon. That picture shows rapt vision and deep meditation, and you have the substance of it all in this book.

Then conceive the whole Gospel as a composition of fine music, a symphony. Get its sweet, appealing, persuasive melodies; get its dreadful discords. Move out into the swing of its triumphant harmonies. It is a majestic work in range and balancing.

And now try to make some clear description of this man—the author of this book.

He must have had a deep and limpid eye. He must have had a master intellect. He must have had a mighty heart. He must have had the sobriety and poise of a philosopher. He must have had a fine sincerity. His mind must have been as spacious and pure as the vault of heaven. You may hear him in his music, for it will never grow mute. You may see

him in his portrait of his Lord, for there are tracings of himself that will never fade.

Do you ask who he was? Well he must have been one who nestled near to his Lord; I think he must have leaned upon His breast. He must have imbibed his Master's warmest affections; I think he might be termed the beloved. He did absorb great draughts of his Master's teachings; truly he was a disciple. He did follow and obey the Master's impulse to go and tell what he had seen and heard; I think he was an apostle. And he must have pondered these things many a long year; I think he was an aged follower when he wrote. And if you ask his name, I must reply that most fittingly it would be woven out of two Hebrew words—Grace and Jehovah—Jehovah's grace. *Johannes*, in the Greek; in the English, *John*.

Such is the author of this Fourth Gospel. A free soul, of a regal purpose, sincere, mature, refined, profound, artistic, spiritual, an apostle, a disciple, a beloved friend, an exponent of Jehovah's love,—*John*.

## APPENDIX





\*REMARKS AT THE BUSINESS MEN'S LUNCH,  
JANUARY 13, 1904.

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MR. LITTLEFIELD. "GENTLEMEN:—I think that business men honestly and sincerely desire to know the truth, so far as my experience goes. I am reminded in that connection of a little church in Western New York that had for its principal supporter a David Harum. A new minister was called to the church and in his first sermon he preached pretty vigorously against certain evils, and the good deacons became alarmed and feared that Brother Harum, who was not a member of the church but a large contributor to its financial support, might be very much offended and withhold his aid. And so they told the pastor the circumstances. Soon after the pastor met David on the street and he took occasion to say to him that he certainly had no reference to him in his sermon. 'That is all right, Parson', said he, 'it is a mighty poor sermon that don't hit me pretty hard somewhere. Go ahead and preach what you believe to be the truth and I shall be satisfied'. I think that is the attitude of business men generally toward the truth. They desire to have thoughtful and free expression of it.

"Now we are very fortunate to have with us today a number of men who have devoted their lives to the study of theological questions. They are what we lawyers call experts in their line; and one of these gentlemen will address us on the subject of the 'Indebtedness of the Churches to the Conference Speakers'. I need not say that this is an indebtedness that cannot be discharged in dollars and cents; an indebtedness far deeper and broader than pecuniary indebtedness is involved here, and I am sure we all recognize it. But I wish to take occasion now to express my thanks to the gentlemen present and absent who have so generously and freely given their financial assistance and made it possible for us to enjoy this lunch and these Conferences.

"It gives me great pleasure to present at this time Rev. Dr. Carter E. Cate, Chairman of the Conference Committee".

DR. CATE.

"MR. CHAIRMAN AND FELLOW CITIZENS:—I am sure we all feel that it is a very great distinction for Providence to have these successful Conferences held here; and we feel that we are privileged in this above most cities. We are making these Conferences a focusing point for the best thought and the deepest experiences of the leaders of New England and beyond. And I am sure it would be unfortunate, if some one did not express better than I am expressing, our deep and sincere appreciation. And I refer to the gentlemen who have come to us today as well as those who have addressed us in the past Conferences. We have been very fortunate in the readiness with which the speakers have followed along the distinctive ideas of these Conferences; the idea of constructive work, the idea of interpretation. They have lifted up the whole truth in a very clear manner.

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\*A very pleasant feature of the January Conference was the Business Men's Lunch, held at the Trocadero between the morning and afternoon sessions. Several of the Conference speakers were in attendance and made brief addresses. Hon. Nathan W. Littlefield presided. About 150 of the business and professional men of the city were present. The occasion was greatly enjoyed.

They have made the Conferences immensely inspiring and helpful to us. We only regret that we have not been able to reach a larger audience. We must circulate the reports, put them into the hands of the people, and by inviting and urging the young men and women of our churches, make a special effort to bring them under the inspiration and help of these Conferences. They combine all the qualities that ought to command the respect and interest of the young men and women in our churches—scholarship, personal character, culture, all these qualities are there which taken together make them unusually inspiring and uplifting”.

MR. LITTLEFIELD.—“The criticism used to be made on the religious schools and seminaries of our country that they turned out men who were deep in the knowledge of books and literature, but did not have a knowledge of men and of life. I think that criticism has ceased to be applicable to the work of the seminaries of our day, and in many ways I think a great deal has been done to bring the student into touch with real life. One of the best seminaries today is the Hartford Theological Seminary, and we shall now have the pleasure of listening to one of its Professors on ‘The Service of the Seminaries to the Churches’. I take great pleasure in presenting Professor Jacobus”.

#### PROFESSOR JACOBUS.

“MR. CHAIRMAN AND FELLOW CITIZENS :—I have sometimes been asked the relation of the seminary to the churches, and I have never failed to answer that question by saying that the relation of the seminary to the churches is the relation of the seminaries to their students, because it is manifestly impossible that an institution should be established to prepare men for the ministry which would not measure its relationship to that ministry by its relationship to the affairs of the church. Times have changed in these last twenty-five years. I imagine as long ago as that Hartford Seminary would have been considered an ultra-conservative institution; and there are some who consider it such today, and some who consider it ultra-liberal. I am glad to say that it does not stand upon either a conservative or a radical basis. It stands upon a basis for which it was chosen, the work of a constructive thinking, a thinking which brings a man face to face with the truth, and directs him in the best way of seeing both sides of it, and then trusts him to his manhood to find his way out. There are a great many of our men who do not find their way out as we wish they would, but there are many who do. But we have the inestimable self-satisfaction of saying with reference to every man who goes out, ‘He is what he has made himself, and not what we have straight-jacketed him to be’.

“We have kept out of controversy because we have held that Christ has entrusted us to train these men to know His truth through knowing Him, and through knowing Christ to bring His truth to the hearts of men; so that the relationship of Hartford Seminary to its students lies in this one great ambition and desire, that she shall so impress her students that in that impression she shall impress upon them Jesus Christ. Manifestly, gentlemen, that is not possible unless there be impressed upon us who sit in the Professors’ chairs the spirit of Christ. And I stand before you with a consciousness born of the humility of experience when I say that the yearning desire of those who sit around the faculty table at Hartford is that Christ shall be so impressed upon us that our impression upon our students can be nothing less than the impress of Him. That is the relationship and the service of the seminary to the church”.



MR. LITTLEFIELD.—“Quite a number of years ago, so many years ago that I will not tell you how many lest it might appear that the gentleman upon whom I am about to call has passed what has been termed the dead-line of fifty, there was a young man in Phillips Andover Academy in the best class that ever went out from that academy, who is present here today as a speaker. It was the best class because Mr. Palmer and myself happened to be members of that class. I now take great pleasure in presenting to this body of business men my friend and classmate, Rev. Frederic Palmer, who will speak upon ‘Church Unity’”.

MR. PALMER.

“MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:—Your president has introduced me to speak upon ‘Church Unity’. And in introducing my brief remarks I would like to ask what does one want more than to look upon this assembly, for a living picture creates a greater impression than a picture of words. I can say nothing more impressive than to ask you to look around you. Every one of us is heartily loyal to his own church, and yet coming here we find a union that is underlying the differences of the outside. It seems to me that these Conferences are a very remarkable indication of the way in which the unity of the church is being worked out. This is a kind of gauge which tells us the point that unity has reached. It tells us also what we have not reached. The old idea was that of uniformity, but that was a mistake. For the moment you try to impress uniformity upon men, that moment you increase the difficulty of the problem. Whatever church unity may be it is not uniformity.

“I think we have also come to the conclusion that uniformity is not desirable, because we are all seeing that beneath our differences there is a response to certain inherent and necessary differences in human nature. I am glad to think that there is a Roman Catholic Church near mine that is full every Sunday morning. I do not desire to see it closed; if it was closed, I do not think its members would come to my church, or to any of the other churches. It is ministering something to that congregation, and we each are ministering to something in human nature; one, it may be, to the social side, another to the spiritual, and another to the intellectual side of human nature, but each making its contribution. What we are coming to hope is that we may get the religious ideas of each one of these churches and present them to the community as a whole. At a meeting in Boston one of the speakers said, ‘If you could get Methodist fire under Baptist water, you could get enough steam to run all the Presbyterian machinery throughout the United States’.

“I think we are recognizing that we have a great degree of common unity at present. I wish the unreality of many of our differences was not so much overlooked. We do business together, we play golf together, and on the great and serious matters of life we come together and unite with each other; but when we enter the door of the church there is some strange difference there that we do not recognize anywhere else. This is conventional; we are doing it from past example, and are allowing it to rob us of a great good. When a person can jest about a subject, that shows that it is not fundamental with him. When Phillips Brooks was rector of Trinity Church he asked Professor Park to come and visit him. He wrote that he could not come, for, as he said, ‘I have just learned from an Episcopal clergyman that I have not been properly baptized’. ‘Come’, Dr. Brooks wrote in reply, ‘I have a little room in a remote part of the house which I keep for just such cases’. When men can talk of their differences in that way, you may be sure they are not real. In one of the little towns out west some years ago, a new clergyman had gone in there who was a ritualist, and after a short time he was introduced

to the Methodist minister, an aged, saintly man. In the course of the conversation the young clergyman said, 'Of course I recognize you as a gentleman, though I cannot regard you as a clergyman'. And the other replied, 'Of course I recognize you as a clergyman, though I cannot regard you as a gentleman'. What is the difference between those two incidents, the one between Professor Park and Phillips Brooks; the other between the ritualistic clergyman and the old saint? There is a difference as wide as heaven is from earth. The difference between the first two men was but slight, but the difference between the other two was wide. The difference is one of spirit, the different spirit of the men, and that is the thing which constitutes the difference between churches. It is not so much ecclesiastical difference as a difference of spirit that divides men. Now, wherever we can recognize a common spirit, there we have unity; and that is where we have been making the greatest advances during the last few years. It is not so much that you can call men by the same name and they will be all of a kind, as that the men of one spirit in a given church are like the men in the other churches of the same spirit. It is the spirit that makes the difference, and that is the important element here. It is not a man's profession in the church which he belongs to; it is, Is he filled with the spirit of Christ? That is what is important and fundamental. So of any church. The question is not primarily of the validity of its orders; it is, Does this church bring men to Christ and fill them with His spirit? Recognizing this as fundamental, we can look upon the members of our churches and yet recognize the something deeper and higher than their church membership.

"Now, you here in Providence are taking the second step in Christian unity. It is impossible that we should ever come together on the ground of external unity, —any one form of worship, or any one organization, or any one creed. That is impossible, and it is undesirable that it should be so. But we are uniting on matters of practical work; on that basis we are coming together. This is so in my own town. Together we are seeing that temperance legislation is carried out, and the charity of the town taken care of. Our town is being cared for as if it were one parish. We have been taking the first step; you have been taking the first step. But it is a second step when we come together and study the question. There is one phrase in the service of my church which I always say with the greatest satisfaction, because it seems to me to give the key to the situation. We pray that we may hold 'the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life'".

MR. LITTLEFIELD.—"We have with us today a gentlemen who has been foremost in organizing the party that is about to leave our shores for the Holy Land. I understand that during this trip among other places of interest the party will visit Jerusalem and Ephesus, the earlier and the later homes of St. John, and I am sure we shall be glad to hear from him something of the purposes and plans of this pilgrimage to the most interesting shrines of the Christian world. I have great pleasure in introducing Mr. A. B. McCrillis, of Providence".

MR. MCCRILLIS.

"MR. CHAIRMAN AND FELLOW CITIZENS :—I am glad to have the opportunity of making a brief statement in regard to the approaching pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The International Sunday School Convention, at its meeting in Denver, appointed a committee of three to arrange for a World's Sunday School Convention at Jerusalem next April.

"One of the finest steamers afloat, the 'Grosser Kurfurst' of the North German line, has been chartered for a trip of 72 days.

"We shall land at Madeira, Gibraltar, Algiers, Malta and many other Mediterranean ports, and make extended stops at the five great cities that have each been recognized in turn as the World's Capitals.—Athens, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Cairo and Rome.

"The company will be made up wholly of representative persons who are in hearty sympathy with the great cause we represent. Already more than 800 delegates have been booked, 31 from Rhode Island and some from every state and territory in the Union, and all but two of the provinces of the Dominion of Canada.

"It is already known that there will be representatives from Mexico and one or more of the West India Islands: and a number of missionaries who have been on furlough in this country will return to their fields with us, taking in the convention en route.

"This is not in any sense to be a pleasure excursion. Nearly 200 ministers are already booked for the trip, and the rest of the company consists of Sunday School superintendents, teachers, and earnest Bible students, who are making the trip that they may better understand the Bible from studying it on the spot where so much of it was written and so many of its scenes enacted.

"We shall cross and recross several times the routes of Paul and John in the Mediterranean, passing the Isle of Patmos, and spending a day in Smyrna, one of the cities to which John wrote, and where Polycarp, John's disciple, received his Martyr's crown, and where his authenticated tomb still remains, a tangible connection between the time of John and our day, connecting the first and twentieth centuries. We shall spend a day at Ephesus distinguished by its theatre and the temple of Diana, but still more by the residence and sufferings of John and Paul.

"The ship is to be our home from our start till our return. We shall have continuous convention work in all departments of Sunday School training, with daily lectures by some of the foremost Bible students in the world.

"At the same time that we go from America, another palatial steamer will start from England for the same destination, with a company that will be at least the equal of ours in its scholarly attainments and its enthusiastic interest in Bible study.

"It is already known that a great many missionaries and Christian workers are coming up to the convention from all over the East, from many points in Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia.

"Seventeen days will be spent in the Holy Land, and a horse-back trip taken the entire length of the land from Damascus to Hebron.

"Our convention tent will be pitched at the foot of the Mount of Olives, within a few hundred feet of Calvary and our Saviour's tomb.

"There will be sectional meetings of great interest at the sea of Galilee, Shechem, the Mount of Olives, and many other places closely associated with the life and work of our Lord and the disciples.

"We shall visit the excavations in progress by various exploration societies at Ephesus, Gezer, Heliopolis and Rome.

"The American Consul General at Constantinople has secured for us special privileges in the city of Constantinople and special protection in our trip through the Land.

"The great Ottoman Museum in Constantinople and the great Boulak Museum in Cairo, and the priceless collections of the Vatican and other museums in Rome, are all to be thrown open to us.

"My time will not permit more than this brief reference to a few of the prominent points covered on our cruise. I should be glad to tell you of the arrange-



ments for the great convention and for valuable side trips. I can only say it is the opportunity of a lifetime and every one who can should avail himself of the privilege”.

MR. LITTLEFIELD.—“I wish at this point to call upon Rev. Dr. Charles M. Melden, Pastor of the Mathewson Street Methodist Episcopal Church, who will address us upon the ‘Relation of Christ to the Church’”.

DR. MELDEN.

“MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN :—It is said that Carlyle and Emerson were walking one day together during Emerson’s visit to Scotland, and during their conversation Carlyle, pointing to a church in the distance, said, ‘If Christ had not died, that church would never have stood there and we would not have been walking here together now.’ And that is emphatically true. If Christ had not lived and died we would not be here in this delightful fellowship to-day. And it seems to me, as the last speaker has so admirably said, that the secret of Christian unity is allegiance to Jesus Christ. Our religion, if it is anything, is loyalty to Christ, a personal relationship, and everyone of us stands true to our profession, if we are true to Jesus Christ, the great Founder of our Church. And in proportion as we are true to Him and loyal to Him will we be loyal and true to each other in delightful, Christian fellowship. This I conceive to be the relation of Christ to His Church. He is the Head of His Church. He fills it with His spirit. The Church is bound to Him by ties of personal loyalty. It is sometimes said that the Church is losing its grip on men. I don’t believe it. It is sometimes said that in working men’s assemblies the name of Christ is applauded and the name of the Church hissed. I do not believe that this is true. Nor do I believe that these assemblies always represent the working men of our country. I believe that the Church has its support very largely from the laboring classes. But I want to say that if the name of Christ is applauded, and the name of the Church is hissed in any country or land, I believe it is because we do not represent the spirit and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ faithfully to men. And it is our business as members of the Church of Christ to show our loyalty to Him by reflecting as far as possible His spirit and characteristics in our lives”.

MR. LITTLEFIELD.—“It is said that Dean Stanley was once calling upon an eccentric man who had arranged around his reception room a large number of mirrors, and as Dean Stanley entered the reception room he looked calmly around upon the multiplied reflections of his form and remarked, ‘A very respectable collection of the clergy’. We are all familiar with the fact that a book has recently been written entitled the ‘Ascent of the Soul’, and probably some of us know the author of that book. Recently this order came from England, the edition having been exhausted there, ‘Please send us a thousand copies of Dr. Bradford’s souls’. This was the multiplication of the mirrors as applied to the Dean of Congregationalism, Dr. Amory H. Bradford. We shall now have the pleasure of hearing from Dr. Bradford on ‘The Light of the World in Japan’”.

DR. BRADFORD.

“MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN :—I do not know how that cable found its way to Providence, but I shall never cease to be surprised at anything which I find in this city. Our time is nearly up, and I shall detain you with my remarks for but a single moment. Your subject, as it is now stated sounds differently from what it did when it was given to me earlier. This morning I was told that I was to

speak on 'The Present Crisis in Japan'; but it makes very little difference which way the subject is phrased. In any case it is too large for an after-dinner speech.

"I shall mention but a few of the many thoughts which press for utterance to us at this time when our eyes are turned toward the Eastern coast of Asia. A great struggle between the Japanese and the Russians now seems to be inevitable. What will be the result? No one can tell. A few facts however, may be stated without fear of contradiction. The Japanese, by the most remarkable tests to which any people could be subjected have proved themselves the most patriotic people in the world. The surrender by the Daimios of the land and authority which they had possessed for generations in order that the unity and greatness of the Empire might be promoted, was the most magnificent act in modern history. If all the governors of the various states of our Union instead of being mere rulers were the owners of their territory, and they, in order that the nation might be spared, should voluntarily surrender all their rights and all their possessions, their act would be parallel to the sacrifices which the Daimios and the Shogun made for Japan. They literally sacrificed everything for the Empire;—many of them were afterward rewarded but their action was not stimulated by the prizes which were offered.

"Japan is the most progressive nation which the world has ever known. It has come to its place of power more swiftly than any other nation ever did. It is only about fifty years ago that Commodore Perry opened her doors to the outside world. The fifty years since then have made her one of the most intelligent, well governed and civilized people on the face of the earth.

"If the conflict which now seems impending must go on, I plead for sympathy for the Japanese. One of their leaders said to me a few years ago when I was there,—'We were not the enemies of China during the late war; we felt that we were called upon to be the teacher of China, and now that the war is over we are as good friends as ever'. That remark indicates their spirit. They stand for an open door, for the larger commerce, for a progressive life and for a more generous civilization. If the war must come the welfare of the world in the immediate future depends upon their success in the struggle.

"But will they be successful? Ah, there is the question! The Japanese are more like the French than the Germans. They are as brave as it is possible for men to be. They care nothing for their own lives; but they are dealing with Russia, that power which seems never to be in a hurry, that never rests, that is pushing on for the possession of Manchuria, and ultimately for parts of China. What the outcome will be none of us know, but I fear that at the first victory will be with the Japanese and then later that it will be the crushing of Japan. Let us pray God that this may not be the result.

"Gentlemen, we here in Providence today have little influence; our meeting will not be heard of in London, Paris, Berlin or in St. Petersburg, but even we may do a little in the way of influencing. A whisper sometimes will start an avalanche, and our whisper may yet be heard even on the continent of Europe. There is one thing at least that we may do, and no American citizen has a more sacred privilege or duty. We may demand that all the powers shall submit their international questions to the Court at the Hague instead of to an arbitrament of arms. I trust that in some way even Russia may be made acquainted with our profound conviction that the questions now at issue between herself and Japan should be referred to that Supreme Court of the world, in that city which, in the order of Providence will some day be the capital of all the nations of the earth. We may

send our conviction as to what should be, and thus do our small part in preserving the world's peace".\*

MR. LITTLEFIELD.—“We are fortunate in having with us the chief magistrate of our State whom I am sure we are all delighted to honor, and although I got him here under a promise not to call upon him for a speech, I hope he will use his executive clemency and pardon me for breaking that promise. The Governor will now address us”.

#### GOVERNOR GARVIN.

“MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN :—As the chairman has said, I came for the purpose of listening and learning. But for two reasons I am interested in the Conference which is going on in this city. In the first place, because as a layman I look at it very much in the way it has been presented to you by Mr. Palmer, as an evidence of the growing unity in religion. In my early days as a boy I remember that there were very great antagonisms among the various protestant denominations. There was a narrowness on the part of individual clergymen in their theological views, and a keen opposition to one another on the part of the various denominations. That has all changed in a very radical way. The evidences of it are not more marked than those which we see here today. And we see this clearly in the Young Men's Christian Association which combines so many different denominations. For this reason your Conference is of great interest to me.

And for another reason. For sometime I have been endeavoring in one way or another to urge upon our citizens the necessity of not relying upon the past, that we should not be all the time referring to what Roger Williams did. We ought to do something as a state that will show that we are progressive and have something to give the world. I feel that this Conference is unique, and I hail it as a promising thing for our state, and trust it will be another impulse for the state itself and will enable us to set an example to posterity as we have inherited one from those who were here first”.

MR. LITTLEFIELD.—“I was fortunate in securing the attendance of another official, but he pleads the lateness of the hour, and also my promise not to call upon him. Yet I feel that we must have a word from him before we adjourn. I take great pleasure in presenting the Mayor of our city”.

#### MAYOR MILLER.

“MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN :—I was very happy to come here today, when I was told by your chairman that I would not be required to speak. It was pleasant to feel that I would not have to do so. I noticed, however, as I sat here, that during the remarks of one of the speakers, the attention of the audience seemed to turn in my direction; and he was speaking then of the former requirements of a minister. I was reminded of a former friend of mine, a very excellent

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\* In accordance with this suggestion of Dr. Bradford, the following resolution, offered by Rev. Frank J. Goodwin, was passed unanimously by a rising vote:

“WHEREAS, The question of a possible war between Russia and Japan is one which concerns the interests of all Christian people throughout the world, who dread the sufferings and horrors of international strife, representatives of different Christian churches, including clergymen and laymen, assembled in the City of Providence, the Governor of the State of Rhode Island and the Mayor of the City of Providence being present, do hereby express their profound conviction that the dispute between the two nations should be submitted for settlement to the court of arbitration at The Hague, which was so wisely constituted a few years ago at the suggestion of the Czar of Russia”.



man who lived in Massachusetts, and he said to me once, "Do you know that less than thirty years ago I moved into a certain town (naming the town in Massachusetts), and I was transferred to the church of that town by letter. And a little while after that the clergyman came to see me and said,—‘Mr. Jones, I understand you are a Democrat’. and I said, ‘Yes, sir, I am of that political faith’. And he said, ‘Mr. Jones, how can you reconcile your profession as a Christian with being a Democrat?’”

“But things have changed somewhat since then. There has been an advance in civilization throughout New England for which I think we are all happy. I am very glad to be here today to listen to the remarks that have been made by the gentlemen present. And I am further reminded of what a change there has been in the religious world since I was a boy. When I was a boy up in a New England town and my parents were Baptists of the strictest type, there was a Methodist church also in the town and I think there was a great controversy between these two churches continually. It did not seem to me then that the members of the one thought there was any chance of the other being saved. I can remember distinctly the bitterness that existed when I heard it as a boy, but fortunately that is all gone by, and today we think we are actuated by different motives, and I am very glad to welcome to the City of Providence the clergymen from other cities and other towns to attend a Conference like this. I am proud for the City of Providence, as the Governor has said he is for the State of Rhode Island, for such a Conference in the midst of us”.

## \* AN ANALYSIS OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

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### PREFACE.

An analysis is an effort to take a literary work to pieces for the sake of finding out just how it was put together, and why it was put together in just the form it bears. The purpose of this task is, therefore, to think the author's thoughts after him, to discover the fundamental ideas underlying the gospel, to show how and why one thought follows another, and to reveal the plan of the whole as it lay in the author's mind.

Nothing could be easier than a topical or subject analysis of John, i. e., the Prologue, John's Testimony, the First Disciples, etc.; and the same thing could be said of a chronological and geographical analysis, except that some details of chronology are difficult of decision. Such analyses are no analyses at all. No one, who has thoroughly studied the gospel, supposes that John planned it in any such external or chronological way, even though he follows a chronological order.

The work is a philosophical one, the results of reflection on the character and words of Jesus. The author is convinced by his experience with Jesus that He was more than He appeared to the world to be, and this book tells us how not only the author but all the disciples came to this conviction. This story of growing belief and final assurance is told by a selection of typical and significant incidents and discourses, which manifest the true inner character of Jesus, as God-sent Messiah, only begotten Son, Divine Word. From beginning to end the purpose is to detail how Jesus manifested His divine glory, how the disciples beheld it, and came to believe (1:14; 2:11; 20:8, 28, 29, 31).

So, of course, Jesus is the one central sun of the gospel around whom all the other characters revolve, and from whom they gain significance. He is the subject of every paragraph, the dominating figure in every scene. Even when He does not personally appear, as in 1:19-28, and 9:8-34, Jesus and His deeds are the focus of discussion. This fact gives the book a wonderful unity.

The inner thought of the book, already described, is to be traced by certain characteristic and typical words. These words indicate, as it were, distinct strands of thought, which the author weaves together to make his gospel. (1) The first and most important strand of thought is Jesus' manifestation of His glory. This runs through the whole book, and is the thread on which all else is strung. Several characteristic words mark it: *Glory* and *Glorify*, *Manifestation*, *Sign*, *Works*, *Light*, *Word*. He manifests Himself as the God-sent, divinely foretold Messiah of the Jews (a subordinate representation), as the only begotten Son of God, as the Divine Word, who was in the beginning with God and was God. He manifests Himself in signs of divine power and love, in words which disclose

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\* Embodying also address on "How the Gospel was Made", delivered at the Fifth Conference, held at the Central Baptist Church, Providence, R. I., February 10, 1904.

a divine character, and in the providentially ordered circumstances which reveal Him. (2) The second strand, closely connected with the first, is Jesus' relation to the Father, especially His union with Him and revelation of Him. The Prologue contains this strand as indeed it contains all the others, and greatly emphasizes it. See 1:1, 14, 18. The profoundest chapters, like 5, 7, 8, 10, 14, 15, 17, are full of it. The thoughts are most clearly expressed in 1:18: 10:30 and 14:9. The characteristic words are *Father* and *Son*. (3) As Jesus moves through the various scenes, manifesting His glory, some see that glory and believe. This belief continually intensifies throughout the history until it becomes absolute assurance, deathless love and divine adoration. On the other hand, others refuse to see, and do not believe. This unbelief also intensifies throughout the history, growing from questioning into opposition, deadly hatred and, finally, apostasy on the one hand and murder on the other. The characteristic words of this strand are *Believe*, *See*. The unbelieving mass is called the *World*, which is *Blind*. (4) So, naturally between these believers and unbelievers comes a separation, which grows wider and cleaner until, with the departure of Judas, Jesus is left alone with His little company, while outside is the great, hostile *World*. The little company has no characteristic name in the gospel. They are *His own*, *His friends*, *His sheep*, *those whom the Father has given Him out of the world*. And yet it has a characteristic and significant word, that word is *Love*; beloved and loving. (5) Belief constantly manifests itself in testimony to the truth. John the Baptist is the first witness: the disciples and all believers constantly testify; Jesus Himself is the great and chief witness to the truth; the Holy Spirit shall testify to Christ as the Spirit of Truth. The characteristic words here are *Testify*, *Testimony* and *Truth*. Unbelief manifests itself also in questioning, opposition, persecution, hatred, and finally in the rejection of the truth, and the crucifixion of Jesus. (6) The final issues are also set forth. The believer has Eternal Life, begun here, lasting forever. This life comes from Jesus, who is Himself the Life, and so the Giver and Sustainer of it. The unbelieving world already rests under Judgment, which is a state of Death. The characteristic words here are *Life* and *Judgment* and *Judge*. *Death* appears only infrequently.

The following work is an attempt to recognize these strands of thought in the Gospel, and to follow their lead in making the analysis. So far as the writer knows, this is the first attempt to follow this principle. *The significant words* have seemed to the writer to be guide-posts, and to indicate the author's inmost thought. Still, care has been taken not to be led aside from the real argument by exceptional and insignificant uses of characteristic words, nor on the other hand to grope when the words fail and the thoughts remain as in chapters 18-20. *These words will be printed in italics*. Constant notes will inform the reader of the reasons for the analysis at critical and difficult points. Side by side with this analysis of the thought, brief remarks will supply what is needed in the way of chronological and geographical interest. No one can recognize more clearly than the writer how imperfectly the general plan has been carried out. The authorities whom I have found most useful are Luthardt, Reynolds, Godet, Westcott and Professor Riggs.

#### THE GENERAL ANALYSIS.

NOTE.—This is inserted before the detailed analysis for convenience of reference for those who wish to examine merely the larger divisions. The wording is exactly the same as in the detailed analysis.



INTRODUCTION.—THE PROLOGUE. 1:1-18.

THE THEME OF THE GOSPEL.—The *Manifestation* of the *Glory* of the *Word* become *Flesh* and its effects of *Belief* and *Opposition*. 1:19—20:31.

I. The Preliminary *Manifestations* of the *Word* become *Flesh*, 1:19—4:54.

A. The Initial *Manifestation* by *Testimony*. 1:19-51.

B. The Initial Self-*Manifestations*. 2:1—4:54.

II. The Fundamental Self-*Manifestations* of the *Word* become *Flesh*, resulting in growing *Belief* and *Love* over against growing *Unbelief* and *Hate*, and a consequent increasing *Separation* of *Believers* from the *World*. 5:1—12:50.

A. Jesus *Manifests* Himself in *Union* with the *Father* as the source of *Life*. 5:1-47.

B. Jesus *Manifests* Himself as the sustainer (the Bread) of *Life*. 6:1-71.

C. The Waverings, Questionings and Attacks of the People in view of past and fresh Self-*Manifestations* of Jesus, mostly defensive. Whence He comes, whither He goes, who He is (7:25-36; 8:21-57) is the subject of discussion. The effects are at first confused and the decision doubtful, but the final Result is open rupture. 7:1—8:59.

D. Jesus *Manifests* Himself as the *Light* of the *World* and the Good Shepherd of His Flock in *Union* with the *Father*. 9:1—10:42.

E. Jesus *Manifests* His *Glory* as the Resurrection and the *Life* in word and in deed with results of final *Cleavage*. 11:1-57.

F. The final effects of the fundamental Self-*Manifestations* of Jesus in the *World*. 12:1-50.

III. The Final Self-*Manifestations* of the *Glory* of the *Word* become *Flesh*, *Manifestations* of His *Love* and Conquering *Life* in *Word*, chapters 13-17, and *Deed*, chapters 18-20.

A. Jesus *Manifests* His *Love* and *Life* in *Union* with the *Father* to those who *Love* Him and, joined with Him in *Life-Union*, are now *Separated* from the *World*, with a constant view to the future (especially the immediate future) of Himself and His disciples. 13:1—17:26.

B. Jesus *Manifests* the *Glory* of His *Love* and victorious *Life* in voluntary surrender to Death at the hands of the *Unbelieving World*, 18 and 19; and the *Glory* of His victorious *Life* in the Resurrection, producing the climax of *Belief*, 20.

APPENDIX.—Chapter 21.

#### THE DETAILED ANALYSIS.

INTRODUCTION.—THE PROLOGUE. 1:1-18.

1. The Pre-existence, Personality and Deity of the *Word*, vs. 1, 2, or the nature of the *Word* and His *relation to God*.

2. The *Word*, the agent in the creation of the entire Universe, for He was the *Life*, vs. 3, 4a, or the relation of the *Word* to the Universe.
3. Because the *Life*, He is the *Light* of men, vs. 4b-13, or the relation of the *Word* to men.
  - a. But that *Light* has always been met by the obtuseness and opposition of human *darkness*, v. 5.
  - b. John *testified* to the *Light* to the end that all might *believe*, vs. 6-8.
  - c. That *Light*, continually streaming into the world, lights every man, v. 9, with two-fold result.
    - (1) He is not generally recognized or received in His own *world*, vs. 10, 11.
    - (2) Some receive Him, *believe*, and become children of God, vs. 12, 13.
4. The *Word* became flesh, and we beheld His divine *glory*, vs. 14-18, or the relation of the *Word* to us, *i. e.*, the author and his fellow disciples.
  - a. This interpretation is in accord with John the Baptist's *testimony*, v. 15.
  - b. And with our personal experience, as recipients of the fulness, grace and *truth* of the *God-revealing Son*, vs. 16-18. (v. 18 returns on v. 14 and v. 1).

NOTE ON 1: 1-18.—These verses, usually called the Prologue, are evidently introductory. In one sense they stand by themselves; in another sense they contain the whole Gospel in miniature, and explain all that follows. We must read the Gospel in the light of this introduction. Indeed we shall find much of the Gospel a somewhat detailed development of the Prologue. These verses, especially the first five, are the author's final convictions about Jesus Christ, the result of lifelong reflection on the historical manifestation of the Word, which he is about to relate. So the author begins with his conclusion, vs. 1-5, and in this introduction sketches in a few bold strokes the main facts, vs. 6-14, and the effect produced by those facts on the world and on himself and on his fellow disciples. This effect he then proceeds to relate at length in the Gospel, ending, 20:28, with the conclusion with which he begins in 1: 1.

Adopting another more topical analysis, some one has called the Prologue the great gate into the Gospel, with three doorways: the first, vs. 1-5, theological; the second, vs. 6-13, historical; the third, vs. 14-18, the doorway of experience. So the whole may be called the philosophic conclusion drawn from an experience of the facts of the life of Jesus Christ.

Note that we have in the Prologue the following characteristic and significant words: *glory*, *light*, *word*, (first strand); *Father*, *Son*, cf. vs. 1, 18, (second strand); *believe*, *world*, (third strand); the *world*, vs. 10, 11, and *believers*, vs. 13, 14, are set over against each other (fourth strand); belief finds expression in *testimony*, vs. 7, 15, and mention is made of *truth*, vs. 14, 17, while the opposition of the *world* to *light* and *truth* is emphasized (fifth strand); the sixth strand is undeveloped; its characteristic *life* appears, and that life is described in men, but not in terms, vs. 14, 16. Judgment, however, is not mentioned, though the separation of judgment is made plain. Thus all the strands of thought in the Gospel appear in the Prologue. Of their words, *love* and *judgment* are wanting, though

the ideas are here; also *sign* and *works*, which belong to the more detailed development. *Word*, in the sense used in 1:1-18, is peculiar to this passage.

PRELIMINARY NOTE ON THE GREAT DIVISIONS OF THE GOSPEL. The Gospel falls easily into three great divisions, excluding chapter 21, which is as clearly an Appendix as 1:1-18 is an Introduction. The first is 1:19-4:54; the second, 5:1-12:50; the third, 13:1-20:31. Chapter 12 is evidently a transition chapter, yet it belongs more with the Ministry than with the Passion. It sums up the issues of the conflict before entering upon the final self-revelations of love and victorious life. Chapter 13 is evidently the historical introduction to the discourse to the disciples, nay even contains the beginning of it. The reasons for placing 18-20 with 13-17 will be discussed at 18. Chapter 20 evidently goes with 18, 19. The historical, literary, and thought connections are very close.

#### THE THEME OF THE GOSPEL. 1:19-20:31.

THE *Manifestation* OF THE *Glory* OF THE *Word* BECOME FLESH, AND ITS EFFECTS OF *Belief* AND *Opposition*.

##### I.

THE PRELIMINARY *Manifestations* OF THE *Word* BECOME FLESH. 1:19-4:54.

NOTE.—These manifestations are varied and fragmentary, and so, in a sense, general, compared with those of chapters 5-11.

A. THE INITIAL *Manifestation* BY *Testimony*. 1:19-51.

1. The *Testimony* of John the Baptist to Christ. 1:19-34.

a. His *testimony* to the Pharisees who knew not *Christ*, though in the midst of them (v. 26). Vs. 19-28.

NOTE.—Here is the first *believer*, John, *testifying* to *unbelief*, which is as yet only non-recognition.

(1) Negative *testimony*. John is not the *Christ*, but a prophesied herald of Him, vs. 19-23.

(2) Positively. The *Christ* is here and is immensely superior to John in dignity, vs. 24-28.

b. Another *testimony* of John, vs. 29-34.

(1) Jesus is the sin-removing Lamb of God, v. 29.

(2) Jesus superior to John on account of His pre-existence (cf. v. 15), but John came that Jesus might be *manifested* to Israel in baptism, vs. 30, 31.

(3) John's *testimony* to the Spirit's descending and abiding on Christ, a divine testimony that it is He who baptizes with the Spirit, vs. 32, 33.

(4) John's *testimony*, Jesus is the *Son of God*, v. 34 (cf. 20:31).

2. The *Belief* and *Testimony* of the First Disciples. 1:35-51.

NOTE.—The little circle of *believers* now begins to grow. Their *belief* springs out of their experience with Jesus (1:14); cf. "come and see", vs. 40, 47. So there is self-revelation of Jesus here, cf. vs. 47-51; but it is very subordinate.

a. John *testifies* again, and Andrew and one other follow Jesus and *believe* (cf. v. 41), vs. 35-40.

b. Andrew *testifies* that Jesus is the *Christ*, and Simon Peter believes, vs. 41, 42.



- c. Philip's *belief* and similar *testimony* to Nathaniel, vs. 43-46.  
 d. Nathaniel *believes* (v. 50), and *testifies* that Jesus is the *Son of God*, the King of Israel, vs. 47-50.

Larger revelations promised, vs. 50, 51.

NOTE ON PLACE AND TIME.—Bethany beyond Jordan, 1:28 (cf. 10:40). Probably about opposite Jericho. After the Temptation. Four days (vs. 19, 29, 35, 43) in later February, A. D. 27, if Jesus was baptized, as is most probable, in early January. Jesus probably not present on first of these days (cf. vs. 26, 29).

B. THE INITIAL SELF-Manifestations. 2:1—4:54.

1. By the *Sign* of turning the water into wine. 2:1-11. He thus *manifested* His *glory* as kindly Lord of Nature (cf. 1:3). Increase of *belief* in His disciples, v. 11.
2. Jesus *manifests* Himself as the Purifier and Lord of His Father's house, reminding His disciples of prophecy. 2:12-22.

NOTE.—A minor strain of thought—that of fulfilled prophecy and divine pre-determination—runs through the Gospel, cf. 12:14, 15, 37-40; 13:18; 15:25; 17:12; 19:24, 36, 37, etc.

- a. In the opposing Jews, Jesus already sees the murderous outcome of *unbelief*, and enigmatically gives them the *sign* of His victory in death and resurrection, vs. 18-21.

- b. After the event, this prophecy increases the disciples' *belief*, v. 22.

NOTE ON TIME.—Passover, beginning April 11, A. D. 27.

3. Jesus declares *Life*, through *belief* in Him, not *belief* in *signs*, the prime necessity. 2:23—3:36.

NOTE.—The transition to the third chapter and that chapter itself are very difficult of analysis. Is Nicodemus one of the untrustworthy believers, who believe the signs and yet do not believe? It seems so, cf. 3:12. In contrast with the Sadducees of 2:18, Nicodemus and his Pharisee friends can read the signs and see that Jesus is a teacher from God, 3:2. Yet, like those in 2:23-25, he and they lack one thing, on which the gospel lays greatest stress, *i. e.*, life, birth from the Spirit. This Nicodemus has not yet. He has not seen the Kingdom of God, much less entered it, for he has no life, which expresses itself in obedience (water, v. 5). He knows not the a, b, c of spiritual religion, v. 10. This is all true despite the fact that Nicodemus afterwards became a real believer. The whole passage is remarkable in depicting the effect of Jesus' first appearance in Jerusalem. There is a lack of clear understanding, a fluidity in the situation, which marks the time before men begin to take sides.

Nicodemus beginning to detach himself from the Jews of 2:18—the woman of Samaria and the nobleman of chapter 4 doing the same thing more decisively—might suggest an analysis. Yet this is too thin a thread on which to string this whole section. So too, placing chapters 3 and 4 in opposition to 2:12-22, we might see how Jesus, rejected by the nation, turns to individuals. But He does not turn to Nicodemus, Nicodemus turns to Him; and the baptizing in Judea, 3:22, is not in line with such an analysis. Moreover in this chapter Nicodemus does not become a believer and so can hardly be classed with the Samaritan woman and the nobleman. The difficulties are so great that Meyer suggests the external expedient of regarding this as an important incident in Jerusalem at this time, related merely because of its historical interest. The better way probably is to regard the Nicodemus incident as the foundation of the teachings about spir-

itual life (cf. 1:33)—here as the prime necessity to real belief. This is further developed in 3:16 sq. and chapters 4, 5 and 6. Chapter 3:1-13 does not constitute a self-revelation of Jesus (cf. however 1:33; 3:34b. Westcott), but vs. 14, 15 do, and are the text from which vs. 16-21 are developed (cf. vs. 31-36). The chapter partakes of the varied and fragmentary character of the whole preliminary section 1:19-4:54, and cannot be pressed into any mold of analysis without violence. Still *life* seems to be the thread, which connects it with 2:23-25, on which most of chapter 3 is strung, and which extends into chapters 4, 5, 6.

Chapter 3:1-15 contains Jesus' first extended discourse, but it is not long, and should not turn us aside from the thought-analysis, which underlies both incident and discourse.

3. (Repeated.) Jesus declares *Life*, through *belief* in Him, not *belief* in *signs*, the prime necessity. 2:23—3:36.

- a. The historical introduction. Many *signs* produce many untrustworthy *believers*. Nicodemus a notable example. 2:23—3:2.

- b. Jesus tells Nicodemus plainly that he who merely *believes* because of *signs*, does not even *see* God's Kingdom; that the prime necessity is new *life*, a spiritual rebirth (cf. 1:13), which shows itself in obedience and joining the company of faith (water, v. 5); vs. 3-8. (Note that it is Jesus who baptizes with the Spirit, cf. 1:33.)

- (1) To this truth *testimony* is borne by (a) the body of Jewish teaching, vs. 9, 10. (b) Jesus, John the Baptist and the disciples—"we", v. 11. (Note the "we" and "ye" begin to show the *separation* of the *witnessing* company from the *world*.) (c) Jesus who knows heavenly realities as none other can, vs. 12, 13.

- (2) This eternal *life* belongs to him, who *believes* not in *signs*, but in the crucified *Messiah*. (This crucifixion a part of the divine purpose, "must".) Vs. 14, 15. Cf. the Lamb of God, 1:29, 36.

- c. The author's reaffirmation and development of the thought of vs. 14, 15. Vs. 16-21.

- (1) The source of the gift of His only begotten Son, is God's *love* for the *world*, a desire that all might have this *eternal life* through *belief* on the *Son* and so should be saved, not *judged*. Vs. 16, 17.

- (2) *Belief*, or lack of it, the ground of present acquittal or *judgment* before God; *judgment* because of rejection of *light*, due to an evil life. Vs. 18-21.

- d. Excursus. Over against the rejection and half-hearted reception in Jerusalem, which drives Jesus into Judea, record is made of John the Baptist's final *testimony* to *Christ* and His ultimate victory, vs. 22-36.

- (1) Circumstance leading up to it, vs. 22-26.

- (2) The *testimony*. Jesus' God-given success is fitting the *Christ*, the bridegroom of His people, and will continually increase, vs. 27-30.

- (3) The author's comments, reaffirming and developing this *testimony*, (a kind of climax and review of the whole section, cf. 3:18-21). The spiritual supremacy of the *Son* and of His *testimony*. He who *believes* counts God *true* and has

eternal *life*. He who does not believe rests under God's abiding wrath. Vs. 31-36.

4. *Jesus manifests Himself as the Life Giver.* 4:1-54.

NOTE.—Chapter 4 is more easily co-ordinated. Vs. 7-15 are the heart of it. Jesus presents Himself as the Giver of the New *Life*, a distinct advance on chapter 3. Vs. 16-42 show Him actually giving and the woman and the people actually receiving the new life. And without a *sign*, save of knowledge, vs. 17-19, 29, they confess Him Messiah and Saviour of the World. That *sign*, *belief*, and *life* are still in mind is shown in 43-54. Here the nobleman *believes* in Jesus before he sees any *sign* at all, and Jesus is seen again in twofold manner, as Life-Giver. So, on the side of growth in *belief*, the last incident is the climax of 2:23—4:54. It seems a mistake to think the principal interest here historical; the historical enters in indeed, and modifies the thought-analysis, but the incidents and discourses are selected for the purpose of *manifesting* Jesus.

a. To the Woman of Samaria, 4:1-42.

- (1) Circumstances leading up to the *manifestation*, vs. 1-6.
- (2) Jesus *manifests* Himself in word as the Giver of *Life*, the Giver of the living water and leads the woman to desire it (vs. 10, 13, 14), vs. 7-15.
- (3) His divine insight convicts the woman of sin and leads her to recognize Him as a prophet, vs. 16-19.
- (4) His word on spiritual worship leads to His self-disclosure as *Messiah*, vs. 20-26.
- (5) Thus leading her to *belief* in Him, He actually gives new *life* to her and her people.
  - (a) The woman's *testimony* (cf. v. 39), vs. 28-30.
  - (b) *Belief* of the people, who *testify* that He is the *Messiah*, the Saviour of the *World*, vs. 39-42.
- (6) Excursus. Jesus tells His disciples of the satisfaction, joy and reward of the harvest to eternal *life*, vs. 27, 31-38.

NOTE.—The woman and the Samaritans believe without any *sign*, save that of divine knowledge, vs. 17-19, 29.

b. To the nobleman in Cana, 4:43-54.

- (1) Circumstances of favorable reception in Galilee, founded on *signs* seen in Jerusalem at the feast, and leading up to the following incident, vs. 43-46a.
- (2) To the nobleman who *believes* the simple word of Jesus, v. 50, without any *sign* at all, Jesus reveals Himself as *Life-giver*, v. 51. Resulting increased *belief*. Vs. 46b-54.

NOTE.—The author does not sharply distinguish between the giving of physical and spiritual life, cf. 5:21-29; 11:25, 26, and chapter 20. A great truth may lie hid here.

NOTE ON TIME AND PLACE.—Notes of time are indefinite. The conversation with Nicodemus probably occurred during, or better, shortly after the Passover, April, A. D. 27. The Judean Ministry, parallel with John's, probably was at least six months long. This brings Jesus back through Samaria into Galilee about December of 27. No one knows where Aenon, near to Salim, was. For Sychar, see Geo. Adam Smith's *Historical Geography*, pp. 367-375.



## II.

THE FUNDAMENTAL SELF-*Manifestations* OF THE *Word* BECOME FLESH, RESULTING IN GROWING *Belief* AND *Love* OVER AGAINST GROWING *Unbelief* AND *Hate*, AND A CONSEQUENT INCREASING *Separation* OF *Believers* FROM THE *World*. 5 : 1—12 : 50.

NOTE ON THE SECOND GREAT DIVISION. — All recognize the preliminary, fragmentary, general character of the First Division, 1 : 18—4 : 54, which makes it difficult to analyze. Most of the fundamental self-manifestations found in 5-12 appear earlier, and all are hinted, but in this section, which constitutes the body of the Gospel, they are presented in more massive form, are discussed and defended at greater length and from different points of view. The Self-Manifestations seem to be the ruling thought of these chapters as a whole. They run through them all, and except in 7 and 8 hold the place of first importance. Another great strand of thought is the growth of Unbelief and Hate, so that some have named the whole Division, the Period of Conflict. This strand must not be minimized if a true view of this division is to be maintained, and yet it is only in 7 and 8 that it becomes dominant, the self-revelations taking the second place. The increasing Separation between Believers and the World rises to the dignity of a third parallel strand, and is especially emphasized in 9 and 10, if indeed it does not dominate there. These last two strands have also appeared in 1 : 19—4 : 54, as, of course, also in the Prologue, but only occasionally and merely in embryo. On many grounds connected with the analysis, the question has been raised whether chapter 5 did not originally follow chapter 6. More will be said on this in note preceding chapter 7. For a brief and clear discussion of this view, see Burton's Purpose and Plan of the Four Gospels, John, pp. 12-20.

A. *JESUS Manifests HIMSELF IN Union WITH THE Father AS THE SOURCE OF Life*. 5 : 1-47.

NOTE ON TIME.—The correct reading of 5 : 1 is "a" feast of the Jews. This is so indefinite as to preclude any dogmatism about it. Possibly the best guess is the Pentecost or Passover (?) of A. D. 28.

1. By the *work* of giving new life to the impotent man. Vs. 1-9.
2. The Opposition urging a charge of Sabbath-breaking, vs. 10-16, Jesus reveals Himself as the *Son* acting in perfect *unity* with the *Father* in thus giving *life* on the Sabbath, v. 17.
  - a. This evokes the charge from the Jews that Jesus claims a peculiar divine *Sonship* and an *equality with God*; they therefore desire to kill Him, v. 18.
  - b. Jesus does not deny their charge, but reasserts an absolute *unity* of action with God, and a perfect knowledge of the inner thought and purpose of God, vs. 19, 20a.

NOTE—The following discourse is on these two lines—Jesus' *union* and *equality* with the *Father*, and His consequent status as a Source of *Life*.

- (1) On the ground of this *unity* and knowledge He promises greater works, v. 20b, viz :—
  - (a) Spiritual resurrection of whom He will, v. 21.
  - (b) *Judgment*, which has been given Him that all men may honor Him even as they honor the *Father*, vs. 22, 23.
- (2) Returning to 2 (v. 17, cf. v. 21), Jesus reveals Himself as a self-existing source of *life*, for both spiritual and corporeal resurrection, vs. 24-29.

(3) V. 30 reaffirms vs. 19, 20a, as the ground of the foregoing self-assertions.

3. Jesus cites the *testimony* for these claims. Vs. 31-47.
  - a. The *Father's testimony*, vs. 32 and 37.
  - b. John the Baptist's, which He does not need, though they may, vs. 33-35.
  - c. His divine *works testify*, v. 36.
  - d. The O. T. Scriptures, which *testify* of Him, and which they do not believe on account of their love of human applause, vs. 37-47.

B.—JESUS *Manifests HIMSELF AS THE SUSTAINER (THE BREAD) OF Life.* 6:1-71.

NOTE OF TIME.—This is near Passover of A. D. 29. See v. 4.

1. By the *Sign* of His feeding the multitude. Vs. 1-24.
  - a. The Story of the Feeding, vs. 1-13.
  - b. Effect. In mere carnal belief (which is unbelief) the people think Him the prophet and wish to make Him a political king, but He withdraws, vs. 14, 15.
  - c. Episode. Jesus walking on the water, a mere historical item, transferring Him to Capernaum, whither the people come also, vs. 16-24.
2. By His discourse on the Bread of *Life.* Vs. 25-59.
  - a. First conversation, leading up to the statement, "I am the true heavenly bread", *life* giving, satisfying, given to *faith* with result of eternal *life* and resurrection at the last day. Result, *unbelief* (v. 36). Vs. 25-40.
  - b. Second conversation, reaffirming the first, especially enlarging on their *unbelief*, and leading up to the declaration that this bread is His flesh, which He will give for the *life* of the *world*, vs. 41-51.
  - c. Third conversation. To the perplexed and *unbelieving* Jews, Jesus emphatically reinforces the former statement, declaring eating His flesh and drinking His blood the pre-requisite of eternal *life*, and the basis of a *life*-union between Himself and the *believer*, vs. 52-59.
3. Results. Vs. 60-71.
  - a. *Unbelieving* disciples, unable to bear this spiritual teaching, which dissipates all their worldly Messianic hopes, walk no more with Him, vs. 60-66.
  - b. The Twelve *testify* their *belief* in Him and cling to Him, but one of them is a devil. Note the separation, but not complete till the withdrawal of Judas (13:30). Vs. 67-71.

NOTE.—In 5 and 6 Jesus interprets His own signs, tracing the power which heals the impotent man to His union with God, and declaring that His feeding of the bodies of the multitude is but a hint of His power to sustain the life of the soul. Some of Jesus' hearers interpreted His signs, but only superficially. Jesus Himself gives them their deepest significance.

NOTE ON CHAPTERS 7 AND 8. An analysis here meets insuperable difficulties, and every scheme is justly open to criticism. The self-revelations of Jesus do not cease, indeed are probably more important in the author's mind than many think. Jesus certainly asserts most strongly His divine origin, mission, function and nature. Yet, after all, these self-manifestations are mostly defensive, brought out by the questions and attacks of the people. So it is the situation which is most prominent. The attitude of the people for the time gets the upper hand in the

drama. The conflict is here at its height, the attack is persistent. Jesus meets it by determined and unflinching self-assertions. The results are at first doubtful; the varying and varied thought of the mixed multitude is strikingly depicted. The confusion of the time has penetrated the narrative itself. The attacks first from one side and then from another, and the fragmentary nature of this report account perhaps for the dislocations, and are true to just such a situation. But in the end the result is open rupture. The Jews hold the field and Jesus retires. In 9-11 He more and more withdraws Himself. His final death and the separation of His sheep from the world are seen to be inevitable.

It would be a great aid to clearness of analysis if the theory of displacement of various sections of the Gospel should prove true, for the difficulties of the present arrangement of the matter are insuperable. In Burton's Purpose and Plan of the Four Gospels, John, pp. 12-20, already referred to, the following rearrangement is proposed: 6:1-71; 5:1-47; 7:15-24 (which evidently refers to chapter 5); 7:1-13, 25-36, 45-52, 37-44; (8:1-11, interpolation); 8:21-57; 9:1-41; 10:19-21; 8:12-20, which evidently has close relations to chapter 9. This rearrangement should be studied carefully, but, as it is still merely a theory tentatively held, the following analysis, of course, proceeds on the basis of chapters 7 and 8 as we have them. However, we ask the reader to note that the confusion in the analysis is only the reflection of the confusion of the material.

NOTE ON TIME.—This chapter 7 is dated, vs. 2, 14, 37, as at the Feast of Tabernacles, Sept.-Oct. A. D. 29. Chapter 8 seems to have the same date, though there is no certainty.

C. THE WAVERINGS, QUESTIONINGS AND ATTACKS OF THE PEOPLE IN VIEW OF PAST AND FRESH SELF-*Manifestations* OF JESUS, MOSTLY DEFENSIVE. WHENCE HE COMES, WHITHER HE GOES, WHO HE IS (7:25-36: 8:21-57), IS THE SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION. THE EFFECTS ARE AT FIRST CONFUSED, AND THE DECISION DOUBTFUL, BUT THE FINAL RESULT IS OPEN RUPTURE. 7:1-8:59.

1. Jesus goes up to the Feast of Tabernacles, an historical introduction with three significant points, describing the character of the following scenes. 7:1-13.
  - a. His time, His final *hour*, has not yet come, vs. 6, 8.
  - b. The *world* hates Him, v. 7.
  - c. The differing opinions of the multitude concerning Him, v. 12.
2. In reply to questions and attacks, Jesus defends His claims and acts, and makes new *manifestations* of Himself. Varying results. Vs. 14-52.
  - a. Jesus asserts the divine origin and the *truth* of His teaching, vs. 14-18, and defends His acts, especially His healing of the impotent man (chapter 5), vs. 19-24.
  - b. Questioning, leading to Jesus' assertion of His divine mission, has varying results, vs. 25-31.
    - (1) Some would take Him, v. 30.
    - (2) Many *believed*, v. 31.
  - c. The Sanhedrin send officers to take Him, vs. 32-52.
    - (1) Jesus, seeing in this, the prophecy of His arrest, predicts His early return to the *Father*, a statement which confuses the Jews and gives no occasion for the arrest, vs. 33-36.
    - (2) He reveals Himself as the *Living Water* and the Giver of the Spirit, vs. 37-39.



NOTE.—Vs. 37-39 come in abruptly; see proposed rearrangement in note above. Still they seem needed here. The officers report His wonderful words, v. 46. They can hardly refer to the words in vs. 33, 34, which, though mysterious, would not be particularly impressive. They probably heard vs. 37-39, and referred to them. On this ground these words are grouped with vs. 33-36 in the Analysis.

- (3) Varying results, especially of the words of vs. 37-39. Vs. 40-52. (Note the strain of separation.)
  - (a) A division in the multitude, vs. 40-44.  
Some say a prophet or the *Messiah*, vs. 40, 41a.  
Some confused by a misapprehension, would have taken Him, vs. 41b-44.
  - (b) A division in the Sanhedrin.  
The officers, impressed by vs. 37-39, do not take Him, vs. 45, 46.  
The Pharisees expostulate with them, vs. 47-49, cf. v. 52.  
Nicodemus deprecates their prejudgment of Jesus, vs. 50, 51.

NOTE.—John 7:53—8:11 is not an original part of this Gospel. It is omitted by R. V.

3. Discussion involving the nature and mission of Jesus, the outcome of the conflict, the true character of discipleship and of the Jews. 8:12-58.

NOTE.—8:12-58 might perhaps just as well have been made into subdivisions, *d. e. f. g.* under C. 2, whose necessarily general heading would cover the contents. A new heading is substituted for convenience of analysis and clearness of presentation, and because the break at 8:12 seems more decisive than any other in these chapters. In this chapter, too, the self-assertion of Jesus grows more positive and important, emerging more clearly from the confusion of the conflict.

- a. Jesus' self-manifestation as *Light of the World* provokes a discussion of the *testimony* on which such a claim is based. Jesus defends His own character as *witness*, and claims His *Father* as another *witness*. Vs. 12-20. In the treasury, v. 20.
- b. Foreseeing the end of this determined and captious opposition, cf. 7:33, 34, Jesus prophesies His own departure, and His opponents' *death* in sin, vs. 21-30.
  - (1) Their taunt, v. 22, leads Him to trace this difference in destiny to a decisive difference in moral character. Only *belief* in Him can save them, v. 24. This is only one of many *judgments* of them which He must speak, v. 26. Vs. 22-27.
  - (2) At the time of His "lifting up", they shall come to understand who He is, cf. v. 25. Result, many *believers*. Vs. 28-30.
- c. Discourse on discipleship and spiritual sonship, vs. 31-50.
  - (1) Discipleship, vs. 31-36.
    - (a) On condition of abiding in His word, disciples shall know the *truth* and shall gain spiritual freedom, vs. 31, 32.

- (b) Developing the thought of spiritual freedom in connection with the idea of Sonship, Jesus declares the slavery of sin and the ability of the *Son* to make them sons, not slaves, vs. 34-36.

NOTE.—The Jews in v. 33 add the idea of descent or sonship to the idea of freedom. The contrast between Jesus' spiritual idea and the people's carnal thoughts is here brought out as strikingly as in chapter 6. The great spiritual truths of this section stand isolated, further elaboration being prevented by materialistic objections, and barren discussion on a lower plane.

(2) Sonship, vs. 37-50.

- (a) Jesus acknowledges them Abraham's physical seed, but asserts that their character shows another spiritual parentage, vs. 37, 38.
- (b) They are not the spiritual children of Abraham, for they are unlike him in character, vs. 39, 40.
- (c) They are not the children of God, else they would love Jesus and receive His teaching, vs. 41-43.
- (d) They are the children of the devil, for they are morally like him, vs. 44-47.
- (e) The Jews' retort, which Jesus repudiates, leaving His *glory* to the great *Judge*, vs. 48-50.
- d. Jesus' promise of eternal *life*, leads to a discussion of whom He makes Himself, vs. 51-58.
- (1) The promise, v. 51, cf. vs. 31, 32, 21, 12, is met by the Jews' scornful objection of the universality of physical death, vs. 51-53a.
- (2) And the question, whom He makes Himself, 53b, vs. 53b-58.
- (a) Jesus replies that He needs not *glorify* Himself. Their God, *His Father*, whom He knows and obeys, *glorifies* Him, vs. 54, 55.
- (b) Their Abraham rejoiced to see His day, v. 56.
- (c) In answer to their inverted question, He declares—“Before Abraham came into being, I am”, vs. 57, 58, cf. 1: 1-3.
- e. Result: An attempted stoning, an open rupture (cf. 7: 32, 45), v. 59.

NOTE.—Violence the last argument! cf. 9: 34.

D. JESUS Manifests HIMSELF AS THE *Light* OF THE *World* AND THE GOOD SHEPHERD OF HIS FLOCK IN *Union* WITH THE *Father*. 9: 1—10: 42.

NOTE ON TIME.—Chapter 7: 2 dates that chapter and probably chapter 8 also, at the Feast of Tabernacles, Sept.—Oct. Chapter 10: 22 dates the following verses at the Feast of Dedication, December. Now 10: 27-29 connect vs. 22-42 so closely with 10: 14-18 that I cannot think that several months intervene. But 10: 1-18 are evidently closely joined in thought with chapter 9. So, although the break at chapter 9: 1 is not decisive, I am inclined to make 9: 1—10: 42 one section in time as well as in thought, and date it all about Dedication, December, A. D. 29, three or four months before the Crucifixion. This is confirmed by the seriousness of the rupture of 8: 59, with which the comparatively mild tone of chapter 9 does not agree. This whole question raised at 9: 1, shows how little our author was writing annals.

1. The *Sign* and its results.

- a. Jesus in the *work*, vs. 3, 4, of giving sight to the man born blind, manifests Himself as the *Light* of the *World*, v. 5. Vs. 1-7.
- b. In the questioning and investigation of it, which follow, after some wavering, v. 16, the *Sign* makes a clear cleavage, v. 34, between the *believing, testifying*, ever bolder, once blind man on the one side and the truth-resisting Pharisees and the worldly-wise parents on the other, vs. 8-34, cf. 1:10-13.
- c. Jesus finds the outcast, who confesses his *belief* and worships Him. He sees in this an instance of that *judgment*, one of the features of His mission, which ultimately *separates* the humble *believer* with spiritual *sight*, cf. Matt. 11:25, from the self-sufficient wise with their spiritual *blindness*. With the latter, rejected *light* increases guilt. Vs. 35-41.

## 2. The consequent self-manifestation. Jesus' relation to the true Israel in contrast with the Pharisees. He is the Good Shepherd of His Flock. 10:1-21.

NOTE.—The idea of *Light* of the *World* is now dropped and the self-manifestation connects itself with 9:34-38. Here the idea of the *separation* of believers, Jesus' *sheep*, from the *unbelieving world*, to which Israel according to the flesh is reckoned, becomes dominant. In this outcast (9:34) blind man, Jesus sees the first member of the new community or flock, who has *entirely* and *decisively* broken with the old Israel and the *unbelieving world*. The Shepherd seeks His persecuted sheep, and reveals His relation to the flock, which He foresees, v. 16, will not be made up only of those who have come out from the Jewish fold.

- a. The illustration. Contrast between a real shepherd and his relation to the sheep, and thieves and robbers; especially the real shepherd leads the sheep out through the door and they follow him, vs. 1-6.
- b. Interpretation from two entirely different points of view, vs. 7-18.

(1) Jesus reveals Himself as the Door, the Door by which the sheep may go out of the fold into more abundant *life*, vs. 3, 4, 10, and through which alone true shepherds gain access to the sheep, v. 9, in contrast with thieves and robbers. Vs. 7-10.

(2) Jesus is par excellence the Good Shepherd, vs. 11-18.

- (a) His characteristics in contrast with the hireling; especially, He lays down His *life* for the sheep, vs. 11-15.
- (b) He has other sheep, not of the Jewish fold, whom He must (divine necessity) bring to make one flock with one Shepherd, v. 16.
- (c) This death, v. 15, is voluntary and will issue in Jesus' resurrection, according to the Father's will, vs. 17, 18.

c. Result of this disclosure—division among the Jews, vs. 19-21.

3. The supplementary and final manifestation of His *Unity* with the *Father*, in answer to the Jews' demand that He be plain about His *Messiahship*, 10:22-42.

NOTE.—Possibly this, instead of 3, should be E, co-ordinate with the self-manifestations of chapters 5 and 6 in importance. Probably, however, it belongs to 9:1—10:21, as a final manifestation of His unity with the Father in such work as



the healing of the man born blind. Vs. 26-29 have an intimate connection with vs. 1-18, and the "then" of v. 22 seems to connect quite closely. This ending reminds us continually of chapter 5.

a. The demand of the Jews:—Tell us plainly if you are the *Messiah*, v. 24.

b. The reply, vs. 25-30.

(1) Jesus appeals to His former statements and *works*, v. 25.

(2) Their *unbelief* due to their character, they are not of His sheep, v. 26.

(3) The real reply. He is the Shepherd of the God-given flock, and gives them eternal *life*, vs. 27-29.

(4) In this redemptive work *He and the Father are one*, v. 30.

c. As they are about to stone Him, Jesus remonstrates, especially answering their statement that He makes Himself God, vs. 31-38.

(1) Their law justifies His assumption of the title, *Son of God*, vs. 34-36.

(2) The *works* prove the mutual indwelling of *the Father* and *the Son*, vs. 37, 38.

d. Result. They seek to seize Him. He escapes to Bethany, beyond Jordan, where many, who had heard John's *testimony*, *believe*. Vs. 39-42.

E. JESUS *Manifests His Glory* (v. 4) AS THE RESURRECTION AND THE *Life* IN WORD AND IN DEED, WITH RESULTS OF FINAL *Cleavage*. 11: 1-57.

1. The historical introduction leading up to the *manifestation* in word, I am the Resurrection and the *Life*, v. 25, *i. e.*, the *Life* which conquers death for those who love and *believe* in Me. Vs. 1-32.

NOTE.—Chapter 5 reveals Jesus as the Source of *Life*: chapter 6 as the sustainer of *Life*; chapter 11 as the *Life* overcoming Death. Nor is there wanting a look forward. He who can thus conquer death is surely not conquered by it later. His death is voluntary, 10: 17, 18, and for others' good.

2. He proves Himself the Resurrection and the *Life* by raising Lazarus. Vs. 33-44.

a. The sympathy of Jesus and His indignation at the woe and ruin wrought by *death*. Vs. 33-38a.

b. The obstacles, vs. 38b-41a.

c. The thanksgiving, vs. 41b-42.

d. Jesus gives *life* to the dead Lazarus, vs. 43, 44.

3. The results. Vs. 45-57.

a. Many *believe*, v. 45.

b. The Sanhedrin, representing the Jewish nation, decides on Jesus' death, vs. 46-53.

NOTE.—This is a solemn and decisive climax in the growth of opposition, exceeded only by 19: 14-16.

c. Jesus retires to Ephraim, v. 54.

NOTE.—Ephraim on the East of the Jordan (?).

d. The people are curious about the situation, which they know to be portentous, vs. 55-57.

NOTE.—Vs. 55-57 constitute a transition passage which could just as well go with chapter 12, to which it is introductory in a sense.

F. THE FINAL EFFECTS OF THE SELF-*Manifestations* OF JESUS IN THE *World*. 12: 1-50.

NOTE.—This is a transition chapter, both a conclusion of the ministry and an introduction to the passion, but more the former than the latter, and so placed here, though not strictly co-ordinate with A, B, etc. The note of *cleavage*, finality, *judgment*, makes the chapter solemn, though final victory is never more confidently predicted. It is, however, victory through death.

1. In relation to the Disciples. The Feast at Bethany. Vs. 1-8.
  - a. On the one hand, a group of *loving* disciples, braving the Sanhedrin's edict, 11:53; Mary's act expressing the acme of devoted *Love*, vs. 1-3.
  - b. On the other hand, Judas, covetous and hypocritical, about to betray Him, vs. 4-8.
2. In relation to the Multitude. The Triumphant Entry. Vs. 9-19.
  - a. The historical situation. The people of Judea, curious and beginning to *believe*; the Sanhedrin condemning even Lazarus to death, vs. 9-11.
  - b. The people, unable after all to understand His spiritual teaching, are still genuinely enthusiastic for Jesus as an earthly King, vs. 12, 13, 17-19.
  - c. Jesus openly *manifests* Himself as *Messianic King*, vs. 14-16.
3. In relation to the Gentiles. The Coming of the Greeks. Vs. 20-36a.
 

NOTE.—The Greeks seek Him, when the Sanhedrin has rejected Him. It is a prophecy that He shall be the Saviour of all men.

  - a. The historical introduction, vs. 20-22.
  - b. The coming of the Greeks shows that the hour has come and *glorifies* the Son of Man as universal Saviour, cf. v. 32, but only by the way of self-sacrifice and death, the road to *glory* for both Lord and servant, vs. 23-26.
  - c. In view of death, Jesus' soul is troubled, a foretaste of Gethsemane, vs. 27-29, but—
  - d. The passion (and resurrection) will be; (1) a *judgment* of the world, (2) a casting out of Satan, (3) a drawing of all men to Himself. Vs. 30-33.
  - e. Jesus meets the Jews' last theological question with a final, practical, solemn warning to walk while they have the *Light*, vs. 34-36a.
4. In relation to the Nation. Final *Judgment* on a review of the Ministry. Vs. 36b-50.
  - a. A *judgment* by the evangelist. The heads of the nation have finally rejected Christ in spite of His superabundant authentication in *signs*, and the intellectual conviction of some of them, vs. 36a-43.
  - b. A *judgment* made up of sayings of Jesus. In rejecting Jesus, they have rejected God, for His message is wholly divine and not at all of Himself; and in rejecting God, they have rejected eternal *life* for themselves. Even though rejected, He will not be their *judge* in any personal sense, but the divine message which He has spoken will be. Vs. 44-50.

### III.

THE FINAL SELF-*Manifestations* OF THE *Glory* OF THE *Word* BECOME FLESH, *Manifestations* OF HIS *Love* AND CONQUERING *Life* IN WORD, CHAPTERS 13-17, AND DEED, CHAPTERS 18-20.

- A. JESUS Manifests His Love AND Life IN Union WITH THE Father TO THOSE WHO Love HIM AND, JOINED WITH HIM IN Life-Union, ARE NOW Separated FROM THE World, WITH A CONSTANT VIEW TO THE FUTURE (ESPECIALLY THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE) OF HIMSELF AND HIS DISCIPLES. 13: 1—17: 26.
- B. JESUS Manifests THE Glory OF His Love AND VICTORIOUS Life IN VOLUNTARY SURRENDER TO Death AT THE HANDS OF THE Unbelieving World; AND THE Glory OF His VICTORIOUS Life IN THE RESURRECTION, PRODUCING THE CLIMAX OF Belief. (18: 1—20: 31.)

NOTE.—B is here put down for convenience of reference. For discussion of its place in the Analysis see note at chapter 18.

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTERS 13-20. Motives of the following scenes, 13: 1-3.

1. The hour has come for Jesus to return to the Father, v. 1.
  2. Jesus' love for His disciples, v. 1.
  3. This return accomplished through the treachery of Judas, and the opposition of the World and the Devil, v. 2.
  4. Jesus' consciousness of His divine mission, dignity and destiny, v. 3.
- A. JESUS Manifests His Love AND Life IN Union WITH THE Father TO THOSE WHO Love HIM AND, JOINED WITH HIM IN Life-Union, ARE NOW Separated FROM THE World, WITH A CONSTANT VIEW TO THE FUTURE (ESPECIALLY THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE) OF HIMSELF AND HIS DISCIPLES. 13: 1—17: 26.
1. Historical introduction to the words of Love and Life, chapters 14-17. 13: 4-38.
    - a. The example of condescending Love in lowly service, and inculcation of it, vs. 4-17.
    - b. Final separation even within the inner circle, vs. 18-30. The treachery of one is announced. A deep grief to Jesus' love, and the traitor, undisclosed save to John, departs leaving Jesus alone with those who love Him.
    - c. Some more or less detached sayings, arising from the occasion, vs. 31-38.
      - (1) In view of His imminent glorification and departure, now rendered certain by Judas' withdrawal, Jesus exhorts His disciples to mutual love, cf. vs. 4-17. Vs. 31-35.
      - (2) To Peter's profession of love to death, Jesus opposes a prophecy of his denial, vs. 36-38.
  2. Jesus manifests His love to the saddened hearts of His disciples, in words of comfort addressed to belief. 14: 1-31.

NOTE.—Vinet called chapters 14-16 a divine confusion, but an attempt is here made to thread the maze. These are merely the most precious fragments of a simple childlike conversation, broken by question and answer. An easy external analysis may be constructed by making the breaks at the questions. We think that John selects and arranges the material on a profounder plan.

- a. By and by they shall be with Him in His Father's house, vs. 1-3.
- b. He Himself is the way to the Father, vs. 4-6.
  - (1) For he who has seen Him has seen the Father, vs. 7-10a.
  - (2) The proof is in His divine words and works, vs. 10b, 11.
- c. Because of His departure the disciples shall do greater works and shall prevail in prayer, vs. 12-14.



- d. On the ground of *loving* obedience, another Advocate will be given, who shall abide with them forever, vs. 15-17.
  - e. He Himself will manifest Himself to them and abide with them, and *love* them and so will the *Father*. The condition is *loving* obedience. The Holy Spirit will explain all. Vs. 18-26.
  - f. He gives them His peace and shows them reasons even for joy. His words have forearmed their *faith*. Vs. 27-31.
3. Jesus *manifests* to His disciples the fulness of His *love*, as a *life*-union. 15 : 1—16 : 15.
- a. Under the figure of vine and branches, He declares that there exists a *life*-union between Himself and His disciples on the basis of abiding. There will be pruning indeed, but also fruit. Vs. 1-6.
  - b. Description, conditions and results of abiding, vs. 7-17.

NOTE.—Probably it is best to unravel the section by following this thread.

(1) Description of abiding.

(a) His words abide in them, v. 7.

(b) They abide in His *love*, v. 9.

(c) The measure of His *love*. As the Father hath *loved* Him, v. 9, He lays down His life for them, v. 13.

(2) Conditions of abiding.

*Loving* obedience to Him, v. 10, and mutual *love* among themselves, vs. 12, 17.

(3) Results of abiding.

(a) Prevailing prayer, vs. 7, 16. (b) Much fruit, vs. 8, 16.

(c) His joy in them, v. 11. (d) They are His intimate friends, vs. 14-16.

c. They are so much one with Him that they must share the *World's hate* with Him, 15 : 18—16 : 15. NOTE. This might be analyzed as one of the results of abiding, b (3) above.

(1) For you are not of the *World*, as I am not, vs. 18-21.

(2) The *World's hate* is inexcusable and gratuitous and has its root in opposition to the *Father*. The *testimony* of the Spirit and of the disciples will be given in the face of such a *World*. Vs. 22-27.

(3) The *World* will excommunicate and kill them, because of its *ignorance of the Father* and of Christ. His words are meant to forearm them in view of His departure. 16 : 1-5.

(4) But just on account of Jesus' departure, the Spirit will come, vs. 6-15.

(a) To convict the *world*, vs. 8-11.

(b) To guide the disciples into all *truth*, thus aiding them in their *testimony* to the *world*, vs. 12-15, cf. 15 : 27.

4. Closing words of hope and warning. Vs. 16-33.

a. They shall see Him again with never ending joy, vs. 16-22.

(1) The characteristics of that time, vs. 23-27.

(a) There will be a new relation between them in which they shall pray to the Father in His name and receive, vs. 23, 24.

- (b) A perfectly clear revelation of the Father and His love to the disciples, vs. 25-27. This leads up to—
- b. Jesus' plain declaration about His coming into the *world* and return to the Father, v. 28, cf. 13:3.
  - (1) Accepted by the disciples with *believing* joy, vs. 29, 30.
  - (a) But Jesus prophesies their defection, vs. 31, 32.
- c. The final word of peace and victory, v. 33.

5. JESUS' FINAL PRAYER. 17:1-26.

NOTE.—In this prayer, Jesus restates and breathes to the Father all the thoughts of chapters 14-16. It is, therefore, not an addendum, but the climax of the whole section. Much repetition demands an almost topical analysis, gathering similar thoughts under one head.

- a. Prayer for His own *glorification*. *Glorify* Thou Me, v. 1, with the *glory* which I had with Thee before the world was, v. 5. Vs. 1-5.
  - (1) In order that I may *glorify* Thee, v. 1.
  - (2) For, (a) the hour has come, v. 1.
    - (b) This *glorification* necessary to His universal authority as *life-giver*, v. 2.
    - (c) He has finished the *work* given Him, v. 4.

TRANSITION VERSES, 6-8.

Describing (1) the *work* Jesus had done on earth, vs. 6a and 8a, and so connecting with vs. 1-5, especially v. 4, and (2) the characteristics of the disciples for whom He is about to pray, vs. 6b, 7, 8b, and so connecting with vs. 9-19. (2) is by far the major chord, and in any analysis, if choice must be made, vs. 6-8 must go with *b* rather than *a*. Still it is best to represent them just as they are, transition verses. These characteristics in (2) also constitute the ground of the subsequent petitions.

b. Prayer for the disciples, vs. 9-19.

- (1) Grounds of the prayer.
  - (a) They are mine and thine. They are my *glory*, vs. 9, 10. They are not of the *world*, vs. 14, 16.
  - (b) Their need as in a hostile *world*, especially in view of my departure, vs. 11a (cf. v. 12), 13a, 14, 16.
- (2) Petitions.
  - (a) Keep them in Thy name with a view to spiritual *unity*, v. 11b.
  - (b) Keep them from the evil while in the *world*, v. 14.
  - (c) Consecrate them in Thy *truth*, v. 17, with a view to a mission like mine, vs. 18, 19.
- c. Prayer for those who shall *believe* through their word, that they may be *one as we are*, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me, vs. 20-23.
- d. Prayer for all whom Thou has given to Me, that they may be with Me in My *glory*. Vs. 25, 26 furnish the grounds of this petition, and restate the grounds of the whole prayer. Vs. 24-26.

B. JESUS Manifests THE *Glory* OF HIS *Love* AND VICTORIOUS *Life* IN VOLUNTARY SURRENDER TO *Death* AT THE HANDS OF THE *Unbelieving World*; AND THE *Glory* OF HIS VICTORIOUS *Life* IN RESURRECTION, PRODUCING THE CLIMAX OF *Belief*. 18:1—20:31.

NOTE.—Chapters 18-20 appear at first sight to be merely historical. Here the strands traced through the Gospel seem to stop short. The words, *life*, *light*, and *glory* disappear. *Love*, *truth*, *belief*, *testimony*, *world*, *death* are used, but do not dominate the narrative and often lose their characteristic significance. It seems as though the inner and higher thought had been abandoned for mere external narrative. This is, however, only seeming. Though the word, *glory*, disappears, the *glory* of Jesus shines through every scene. In dying for the people (18:14), He victoriously finishes the work of *love* given Him to do (19:28-30), and manifests His *love* for the *World*. His *love* for His own dominates the arrest and the trial before Annas, and shows itself on the cross (19:25-27). His calmness, courage, conscious innocence, voluntary submission and obedience to the will of God clearly understood by Him, the majesty of His character, in other words the *glory* of His victorious *Life* or Spirit, manifest Him as *Judge* of His judges, and spiritual King of all men. In these chapters, the manifestation of Jesus as Messiah, so frequent in the earlier chapters (1:11, 20, 32-34, 41, 49; 4:25; 7:41; 9:22; 11:27), again comes to the front as it naturally would in this historical situation. He appears as Messianic King for the Jews (18:33-39; 19:3, 12-15, 19-21,—the King of *Truth* for the Romans, 18:36, 37). As such He is rejected and murdered by them, and in the act they accomplish a final apostasy. He came unto His own and His own received Him not (1:11). This is the ultimate issue of *unbelief*, and the condemnation, the *judgment*, of the *World*. *Belief* appears fitfully in 18 and 19, but only in contrast. Its full bloom is seen in 20. Arrest, trial, cross, burial are all lenses through which the *glory* of Jesus shines. Through them the Father begins to *glorify* the Son (12:31-33; 17:1). See remarks introductory to chapter 18 in Westcott and Godet.

Chapters 18 and 19 are sometimes made the fourth of five prime divisions of the Gospel, chapter 20 being the fifth. We shall argue strongly against such a separation of chapter 20 at that point. Whether a new prime division is to be made at chapter 18 depends largely on the point of view. If the view-point is merely historical and external, then the break will be made here, as the change from discourse to narrative, from the inner circle of love to the hating world is obvious enough. If, however, we allow the manifestations of Jesus to rule our analysis, we find in the whole section 13-20 the supreme manifestations of Jesus' love, first in word and then in deed, an inner and an outer revelation. Nor are the contrasts between the attitudes of the Believing Company and the great hostile World, one full of love, the other of hate, to divide the sections, nay, they knit them together in one. So we make the third and final grand division 13-20, with a deep cleavage at 18.

1. Jesus manifests the *Glory* of His *Love* and victorious *Life* in voluntary surrender to Death at the hands of the *Unbelieving World*. 18:1—19:42.

a. The story of the arrest, 18:1-12, revealing—

- (1) Jesus' perfect knowledge of the immediate future, vs. 4, 11.
- (2) His *love* protecting His disciples, vs. 4-9.
- (3) His calm superiority to His foes, vs. 4-6.
- (4) His voluntary surrender to death, according to the Father's will, vs. 10-12.

b. The Jewish trial, including the denials of Peter, vs. 13-27, revealing—

- (1) *Belief* and *love*, in Peter, at their lowest ebb (vs. 17, 18, 25-27) over against the faithfulness of the shadowy John, vs. 15, 16.



- (2) Unscrupulous *unbelief* craftily bent on murder, vs. 13, 14, 19-24, and beginning to show violence, v. 22.
  - (3) The openness and calmness of Jesus in reply, vs. 20, 21, 23.
  - (4) His *love* protecting His disciples, v. 19, cf. Jesus' reply.
  - c. The trial before Pilate, 18:28-19:16, revealing—
    - (1) The unbelief of the Jews, rejecting and demanding the death of their Messianic King, whose claim to be the *Son of God* they are forced to declare, 19:7, preferring a robber, 18:40, and finally apostatizing from Jehovah by denying any king but Cæsar, 19:15.
    - (2) The *glory* of Jesus in His words and His silences, His calmness in trial, and His patience in suffering.
      - (a) His *glory* as spiritual King in the realm of *truth*, 18:36, 37.
      - (b) A King despite, indeed in the midst of, scourging and mockery, 19:1-3, and shouts of hatred, 19:6.
      - (c) As Pilate's Master and *Judge*, 19:11—(a), (b) and (c)—in contrast with the vacillating and finally beaten governor.
      - (d) As perfectly innocent of every wrong, 18:39; 19:4.
    - (3) All this is in accord with God's will and voluntary on Jesus' part, 18:31, 32; 19:11.
  - d. The crucifixion and death, 19:17-37, showing—
    - (1) How Jesus gets His rightful title on the cross, despite objection by the Jews, vs. 19-22.
    - (2) How all the incidents of the crucifixion fulfilled God's will, vs. 23, 24, 28, 36, 37.
    - (3) Jesus, still master of the situation, *loving* and *beloved*, vs. 25-27.
    - (4) Jesus finishing His God-given mission in suffering and death, vs. 17, 18, 28-30.
- NOTE.—(1) (2) (4) all show defeat of the Jews and victory of Jesus even on the cross.
- e. The burial, 19:38-42, showing—
    - (1) How *belief* grows strong in the darkest hour. *Believers* come forth from the very ranks of the Sanhedrin to bury Him, vs. 38, 39.
    - (2) The beginning of Jesus' exaltation. He has befitting burial, taken down from the cross with loving hands, swathed with clean linen and costly spices, buried in the unpoluted tomb by rulers of Israel.

2. Jesus in *Love* manifests the *Glory* of His victorious *Life* in Resurrection, producing the climax of *Belief*. 20:1-31. This the last sign, 20:30; cf. 2:18-21.

NOTE.—Chapter 20 is to be taken as the second part of a division, 18-20. 18 and 19 tell the climax of *Unbelief*; 20 tells the climax of *Belief*. They are two halves of one whole. Still, through the halves run many connecting strands. The note of victorious *life* is not absent from 18-19, cf. the analysis. Even the cross witnesses the beginning of victory, and the burial is the first step in the exaltation. The *glorification* of Christ (12:28, 32; 13:31, 32; 17:1) includes both death and resurrection, and what Christ has joined in this word, we must not put asunder.

Chapter 20 is the climax and crowning joy of the whole section beginning with chapter 13, which is so sombre with death for the most part.

a. The facts of the Resurrection morning, 20 : 1-18, showing—

(1) How Peter and John saw the empty tomb and the grave clothes, and how John came at last to perfect *Belief*, vs. 1-10.

(2) How Mary's sorrowing *Love* was turned into adoring and triumphant *Belief* by Jesus' appearance to her, vs. 11-18.

See Professor Riggs' Outlines for v. 17.

b. The facts of the Resurrection evening, showing how the saddened and fearful Eleven came to *Belief*, peace, joy, purpose and power through the appearance of the *glorified* Jesus to them, vs. 19-23.

c. The facts of the meeting with Thomas, showing how the last doubter among the Eleven came in *Belief* to utter the supreme declaration, "My Lord and my God", through the appearance of Jesus to him, vs. 24-29.

NOTE.—"My Lord and my God" is the climax of the Gospel, to which the author has led us up through its whole development. The disciples, through their experience with Jesus, come at last to believe not only that He whose *glory* they had beheld was the *Word* made flesh, 1 : 14, but that "In the beginning was the *Word*, and the *Word* was with God, and the *Word* was God", 1 : 1. So the Gospel at the end returns to its beginning, and all that lies between is to be interpreted in view of this beginning and this end.

EPILOGUE.—Final statement of the purpose of the Gospel : *Belief* in Jesus as the *Messiah*, the *Son of God*, and through *Belief*, *Life* in His name, vs. 30-31.

NOTE.—In these verses we find again the characteristic and significant words and phrases in profusion.

#### APPENDIX. 21 : 1-25.

NOTE.—This is evidently, cf. 20 : 30, 31, an appendix, an afterthought, and has its motive in the correction of the false report that John should not die before the Second Coming, 21 : 21-23. It seems at first purely historical, like chapters 18-20, and like them, lacks almost entirely John's significant and characteristic words. Has it then no inner meaning, such as we have found in the Gospel hitherto? The presumption is all the other way. The motive in writing was the correction of a false report, that correction led to the narration of the conversation from which the report started, and that conversation called up the scene and the circumstances. This scene and Christ's words did not merely *seem* significant to John ; like all the others recorded in the Gospel, they were *actually full of* deep meaning. So the fishing scene is more than the annals of a miraculous catch (cf. L. 5 : 1-11, especially v. 10), and the other scenes likewise. To be sure, we lose the strands which run through the Gospel. Both *Unbelief* and *Belief* have reached their climax ; the one in apostasy, the other in clear insight into the deity of Christ, and there is nothing more to be said in those lines. The scenes of chapter 21 deal with the future work of the church.

1. The fishing scene, vs. 1-14, *manifesting*, v. 1,—

a. The presence of the risen Lord with His disciples in their daily toil.

- b. His loving direction of their labors to a successful issue, cf. 15 : 5.
- c. His gracious supply of their need.
- 2. The reinstatement of Peter, his work and his end (cf. his boasts, 13 : 36-38 and his denials, 18 : 15-27), *manifesting* the Lord's loving, yet thorough dealing with Peter's sin, and His gracious restoration of him. Deeply showing the work of the church, the perils it must encounter, and its one duty of following Jesus, vs. 15-19.
- 3. How the false report about John arose. Its correction. Vs. 20-23. Final attestation by another hand (?), vs. 24, 25.

NOTE.—In finishing this analysis, involving a careful review of the inner thought and construction of the whole Gospel, I cannot refrain from declaring my increased belief in its trustworthiness as history. Recognizing to the full its philosophic view-point, I have ever found the historical situation impregnating, modifying, interrupting the philosophical trend. This is just what would naturally occur in writing with the design of presenting the inner meaning of a real history.

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July 1, 1904.



## SUGGESTIVE STUDIES AND REFERENCES.

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### CHAPTER I.

1. THE WORD. Find out His qualities here. Compare ch. 17.
2. THE FLESH. Trace out its fellowship with us. Compare the sympathy and help in chs. 5, 6, 9, 11, etc.
3. THE REVELATION. To find its content weigh and open the words "glory", "grace", "truth", the "Father declared". Trace parallels to these themes in chs. 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 17.
4. THE SONSHIP—"made sons of God". Study the agent, the birth, the faith, the life. Compare with this gift of sonship, the gift of "eternal life" in ch. 6.
5. JOHN THE WITNESS. His traits. His task. His fortune. Compare chs. 3:22-36; 5:35.
6. JOHN'S TESTIMONY. Christ's enduement, v. 32. Christ's work: bearing world-sin, v. 29; baptizing with the Holy Ghost, v. 33. Compare chs. 3:14-16; 10:11; 12:32, and 7:38, 39; 16:7.
7. THE TRAGEDY in vs. 10, 11. Trace its development in chs. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and its awful end in ch. 19.

### CHAPTER II.

1. CHRIST'S SOCIAL FELLOWSHIP. See other instances in chs. 6, 11, 13, 21. Trace out the strength of this social impulse in Christ.
2. THE MAKING OF THE WATER INTO WINE. Study this as an illustration of ch. 1:3. Find other illustrations in chs. 5, 6, 9, 11. Study here the meaning of His claim to be the "Bread of Life", ch. 6, and of the fact of His resurrection.
3. THE PASSOVER, v. 13. Study meaning of Christ's attendance at Jewish feasts. Compare chs. 5:1; 6:4; 7:2; 10:22; 12:12.
4. CLEANSING THE TEMPLE. Note how this act honors the temple. What was Christ's aim? What did the temple *mean*? How deep is the contrast between trade for gain, and worship with prayer and sacrifice?

### CHAPTER III.

1. STUDY NICODEMUS. He is curious, but dull; a teacher, but crude; a leader, but inert: religious, but unbelieving; inquiring, but obdurate. Compare and contrast him with other characters in the book.
2. THE WORLD. Gather all that is said of it in this chapter. Trace the same study through the Gospel.
3. GOD'S GIFT, v. 16. Search out God's part in providing Christ, especially ch. 17.
4. THE SPIRIT-BIRTH, v. 5. Show connection of this with teaching about

"living" water in ch. 4, bread of "life" in ch. 6, the spirit-fountain in ch. 7:37, etc.

5. JOHN'S WITNESS, vs. 22-36. John's ministry. Christ's primacy. John's moral kinship with Christ.

#### CHAPTER IV.

1. DESCRIBE THIS WOMAN. Coy, cold, narrow, shallow, crude, pliant. Compare and contrast her with other women in this Gospel.

2. STUDY INTO THE SAMARITAN-JEWISH FEUD. Their view, the Jew's view, Christ's view, their changed view, its real roots. Find signs of kindred narrowness and enmity in this Gospel.

3. CHRIST'S BREADTH, v. 42. Define this carefully here. Cite signs of it elsewhere.

4. CHRIST'S SOLITUDE. None could appreciate His love and zeal, v. 27.

5. THE WOMAN'S SIN. Her shyness. Christ's sharpness. Find other similar instances.

6. SPIRITUAL WORSHIP OF ONE SPIRIT GOD. Contrast false, unspiritual religion in chs. 2, 3, 5, 6, 9.

7. SOWING AND REAPING. Division of labor. Unison in joy. Compare ch. 3:28-30.

#### CHAPTER V.

1. A CASE OF EXTREME NEED. Compare other sorts of need in chs. 6, 9, 11.

2. JEWISH SABBATH RULES. A lifeless, inhuman code. Compare signs of cold formality in chs. 2, 3, 6, 9, 18:28.

3. THE CONTEST. Define closely the charge. Trace carefully the defence and counter charge. Study out the power of the argument in the words Father, Son and Love. Compare other contests in chs. 8, 10 and 18.

4. Scan Christ's evidence, vs. 31-39. Detect the *nature* of His proofs. Compare the nature of His arguments in chs. 7, 8 and 10.

#### CHAPTER VI.

1. Study the physical need and the physical supply, comparing similar instances in chs. 2, 4, 5, 9, 11. Note how fundamental and proper all these cases are.

2. Study the parallel spiritual need and the spiritual supply, comparing chs. 3, 4, 11 and 16.

3. Take the outside measure of Christ's own consciousness in this chapter noting specially v. 51, and marking his repetitions. Trace this same consciousness in chs. 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.

4. Make special study of the arguments on both sides in this chapter. Define sharply all the prime postulates. What was to be proven on Christ's side? What was the final evidence? Study similarly the arguments in chs. 3, 5, 9, 11, 21.

5. Frame briefest possible definition of Christ's worth and work in terms of this chapter. Then cite as many synonyms for this as the chapter will yield.

#### CHAPTER VII.

1. THE UNTAUGHT TEACHER, v. 15. Look into Christ's absolute originality. See this in chs. 5, 6, 12, 16, 18.

2. THE TRUE TEACHER, v. 18. Look into Christ's emphasis on genuineness, verity, fidelity to His commission. See this fine and jealous and supreme appreciation of Truth in the talk with Pilate, and in the parables of the "true" vine and the "good" Shepherd.

3. THE BOLD TEACHER, v. 14, vs. 25, 26. Mark this same fine courage in chs. 10, 11, 18.

4. THE EXHAUSTLESS AND SATISFYING TEACHER, v. 37. Compare ch. 4, 14-16.

5. THE DIVINE TEACHER, v. 16, vs. 28, 29. Find signs throughout the Gospel of Christ's claim to speak for God.

6. OBDURATE PUPILS, v. 47. Note their presence and attitude in chs. 5, 6, 8, 9, 10.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### 1. STUDY INTO THE EMPHASIS UPON "TRUTH" IN THIS CHAPTER.

a. The True Light, v. 12. Note the phrases, light of the "world", light of "life". Weigh them.

b. The True Witness, v. 14. Look into the argument here.

c. The True Judge, v. 16. Test the link of logic here also.

d. The True Prophet, v. 28. Note the ground here.

e. The True Emancipation, vs. 31, 32. Here is the core of this chapter, and the well-head of all good morals.

f. The True Son of God, vs. 54, 55. See how ultimate an avowal this is in this whole argument.

In all these assertions see how sure, and plain, and strong, and calm the Master is. Then mark the relation of these qualities to this "Truth".

### 2. STUDY INTO THE STATE AND PLIGHT OF HIS ENEMIES.

a. They are in Darkness and Ignorance of Vital Truth, v. 19.

b. They are in Error, v. 13, vs. 52, 53.

c. They are in Sin of Unbelief, vs. 24, 46; Murder, v. 40.

d. They are in Bonds, v. 34.

e. They are in Hopeless Doom and Guilt, v. 21.

f. They are of the Lineage of the Lord of Murder and Lies, v. 44.

In all this chapter see how set, and hard, and blind, and bad these antagonists are.

3. See in this chapter the typical and final contest. It is light *vs.* darkness, truth *vs.* lies, love *vs.* hate, sure testimony *vs.* unbelief, Christ *vs.* Satan. Note how the same battle is set in chs. 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 18.

## CHAPTER IX.

### 1. STUDY CHRIST HERE.

a. His Insight, v. 3. Here is a glint of a real philosophy of life. Read 8: 12, the words occasioned by the visit of the Greeks in ch. 12, and the conversation with Pilate in the light of this.

b. His courage, v. 7. Braving sacred, religious traditions.

c. His mingled Judgment and Tenderness, vs. 35-41.

### 2. STUDY THE BLIND MAN.

a. His condition before the healing—a blind beggar in the Orient. Weigh each word. Feel his sad plight.



- b. Mark the outburst of his latent manhood after the healing. This is splendid. Ponder what it *means*.
  - c. Try to conceive his subsequent history.
3. STUDY THE PARENTS, noting their cautious fear, how it prevails above parental solicitude and joy.
4. THE PHARISEES.
- a. Their bondage to rude rules.
  - b. Their ideas about Christ.
  - c. Their excommunication of the man. Trace the arguments. Estimate their strength, their futility. Define their views of character, of authority, of government.
  - d. Outline carefully and in detail Christ's view of them.
5. Compare chs. 5 and 11 along these lines.

## CHAPTER X.

1. THE SHEPHERD PARABLE, vs. 1-21.
- a. The Shepherd's duties: to guard, feed, save.
  - b. The Shepherd's traits: watchful, faithful, bold, good, sacrificial, familiar.
  - c. The Shepherd's method: folding, calling, leading, knowing each one.
  - d. The Shepherd's cost and reward.
  - e. The Shepherd's counterfeit: heedless, thievish, sly, timid, strange, destructive.
  - f. Special study of Christ as Shepherd: His lordliness, His devotedness, His defamation, His honor from God.
  - g. The sheep—making your description correlate carefully with that of the Shepherd; their need of protection, guidance, etc., and their peril from neglect, attack, etc.
2. Show how the scheme of this parable comprehends the entire career and ministry of Christ. This whole Gospel is here in a beautiful miniature.
3. See how the whole is condensed again in vs. 22-39. Spoken very likely at a different time.

## CHAPTER XI.

- A STUDY OF CHRIST'S SPLENDID MASTERY of all things in the sickness, death and resurrection of Lazarus.
- a. His mastery in interpretation of meaning of disease, v. 4.
  - b. His mastery of the order of events in delay, v. 6.
  - c. His mastery of peril in a calm daring, vs. 8-16.
  - d. His mastery evinced in majestic self-consciousness, v. 25.
  - e. His mastery of the future in His promise, v. 23.
  - f. His mastery of others in authority, vs. 39, 40.
  - g. His mastery in supplication, v. 41.
  - h. His mastery over death in resurrection, vs. 43, 44.
  - i. His mastery over the Sanhedrin, driving them to desperation, vs. 47-53.
  - j. His mastery of the final crisis by flight and hiding, v. 54.

See how in this chapter Christ forced and yet held in full control the Pharisees' fear and hate. Compare chs. 5, 10, 12: 12-19.

## CHAPTER XII.

1. THE MINGLING OF HONEY AND GALL IN CHRIST'S LOT, vs. 1-11; anointed, quarreled over, hunted. See how their enmity is the outgrowth of His friendliness. Study His companionableness. It is ideal. Watch how He cherished friendship. But see how hate smites Him in the midst of His joy. His lot was always a medley.

## 1. THE TRIUMPHANT ENTRY, vs. 12-19.

- a. Mark its engaging gentleness.
- b. Note its matchless daring.
- c. Estimate its compelling energy.
- d. Study the act as the culmination of all the series of events from the sending of the Seventy.
- e. Discern how resistlessly it bears on towards the cross.

3. THE REMARKS AT THE VISIT OF THE GREEKS, vs. 20-36. Here again is profound philosophy.

- a. Its occasion—a visit from aliens.
- b. Its statement in parabolic form, v. 24.
- c. Its illustration in Christ, vs. 32-33.
- d. Its application to disciples, vs. 25, 26.
- e. Its agony, v. 27.
- f. Its conflict, v. 31.
- g. Its rewards—fruit, v. 24; life, v. 25; fellowship, v. 26; honor, v. 26; glory, v. 28; world conquest, v. 32.

Here again is the whole Gospel in brief. Show this true.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## AN ALL-ROUND STUDY OF LOVE.

1. THE BLESSEDNESS OF ITS HUMBLE MINISTRIES—The feet washing. Note the contrasts here in the petty jealousies over scant worthiness in the disciples, and the easy humbling of a mighty dignity in Christ. Keep in sight the near-impending sacrifice and ascension, vs. 1-20.

2. THE AWFUL HAVOC OF LOVE'S ABSENCE—The outrageous betrayal, vs. 21-30. Study into its easy action, its essential abhorrence (what are its marks?) and its Satanic inspiration. Can you trace its infection still?

3. THE VALIDITY OF LOVE as the new and final counsel and command of Christ, vs. 31-38.

- a. Study it in view of Christ's glory, vs. 31, 32.
- b. Study it in view of Christ's absence, v. 33.
- c. Study its adequacy for world-witness, v. 35.

Compare this paragraph with ch. 17.

## CHAPTER XIV.

1. MIND THE GREAT THEMES. God, Christ, God in Christ, Christ in God, the Holy Spirit, the mansions, prayer, peace, life, the greater works, the mansioning together of Father and Son and disciple.

Study each theme searchingly, *e. g.* :

2. THE DISCIPLE. His obedience, his love, his prayer, his insight, his works, his earthly tranquillity, his heavenly home, his companionship with God and Christ and the Holy Spirit.

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT. His full equipment to do Christ's work, his mission

of solace and defence and tuition and grace, his wealth of knowledge and goodness, his deep indwelling, his respect for Christ.

So explore all these themes. Full tides abound in this chapter.

#### CHAPTER XV.

##### 1. THE VINE. Vs. 1-17.

a) Study until you can name and sharply define each *part* of this parable.

b) Study until you can see what Christ was *at*, what was His aim, what it all *means*.

c) Study until you warm with admiration of Christ's *skill*.

##### 2. Vs. 18-23.

a) THE WORLD. Ignorant of God, hating God, hating Christ, hating Christ's elect, but stripped of all excuse. Study in particular into *hate*, its nature, its genius, its propensity, its fruitage.

b) CHRIST. Study His deep insight, His plainness, His innocence, His intrepidity. Try to sense His poise and beauty of character. See how all His radiance is heightened by all the world's abhorrent iniquity.

c) Trace out how other scenes in this Gospel brought out just these fine qualities.

#### CHAPTER XVI.

##### 1. Vs. 1-16.

a) Get an outline of Christ's full prevision.

b) Mark His frankness in disclosing to His band their coming lot, excommunication, offense, death.

c) His careful thoughtfulness, to forewarn, fortify, provide, re-assure, adapt teachings to capacity and needs.

d) His triumphant calm. His ways are orderly and timely; He handles like a real master the ultimates—righteousness, sin, judgment, faith, Satan, God; He makes full unfolding of the Spirit's work.

##### 2. Now see how these features unfold through the rest of the chapter.

#### CHAPTER XVII.

##### 1. NOTE CHRIST'S ATTITUDE—eyes lifted up to heaven.

##### 2. HIS LOGIC—See how He *argues*.

##### 3. HIS FACTS. List His *statements*. They constitute most of the prayer.

##### 4. HIS PETITIONS. Get them exactly. They are surprisingly few.

##### 5. HIS MOMENTUM. Try to measure the passion, the eagerness, the pressure, the onset of the prayer.

##### 6. HIS FAITH. Just what was Christ trying and expecting to do?

##### 7. HIS OUTLOOK. Try to get His range. What was in His eye? Take the girth of these words: "truth", "belief", "life", "world", "evil", "glory", those little words "in" and "one" in v. 23.

##### 8. Describe the inner and outer aspect of this prayer. Is it mostly radiant, or does it stand in shadows? Are its inner deeps tranquil or troubled?

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

##### 1. THE ARREST. Measure all the indignity of that "binding". Study Christ's majesty and beauty, and pity and patience in it. Look within His mind. Find His point of view. What would He be thinking of the manacles, of the soldiers, of the Jews, of the disciples, of Himself, of God?



2. PETER'S DENIAL. There were *reasons* for this. Try to find them out. What was Peter's philosophy, point of view, standard of judgment?

3. BEFORE THE HIGH PRIEST. Name the essentials of a *proper*, judicial procedure. Did the high priest *pretend* to recognize them? In what respect was he unfair?

4. BEFORE PILATE.

a) Study that little quarrel between Pilate and the Jews.

b) Explore that conversation between Pilate and Christ. What was the secret of Christ's art here? What main idea was in Pilate's mind?

c) How many qualities of "Truth" can you name?

d) How many qualities of Christ can you name?

e) How many qualities of Pilate can you name?

## CHAPTER XIX.

1. Make as full a description as you can of Christ with the crown of thorns, or while being scourged.

2. How *manifest* was Christ's innocence?

3. What different reasons can you suggest for Christ's silence?

4. See if you can explain *fully* the High Priest's rage.

5. Describe the weakness and the power of a "throng".

6. List *all* Christ's burdens on the cross.

7. The soldiers—how does a soldier's life in arms affect his manhood?

8. See how far you can define "death" as endured by Christ.

9. Write a contrast of the two scenes: the Crucifixion, and the Burial of Christ.

## CHAPTER XX.

1. Name the traits displayed by the disciples at the tomb—as eagerness, sorrow, love, ignorance, wonder, timidity, honesty, confusion, unbelief. Probe each.

2. Study these things *together*—the tomb, its order, the angels, the fact of the resurrection. Find out the *nature* of this whole transaction.

3. Hold together the risen Lord's familiarity and majesty, His triumph and tenderness, His authority and companionship. Look deeply into each. Bring them all to blend.

4. Note Christ's themes—the Father, His brethren, the ascension, His wounds, His own identity, the mission of the Spirit, sin, faith, forgiveness, peace.

## CHAPTER XXI.

1. THE MORNING MEAL.

a) Dwell upon the disciples' futile toil.

b) Ponder the Master's efficiency.

c) Weigh Christ's concern for men's bodily needs. Cite other cases.

d) Study the Master at the meal. Did He eat? How would you characterize, in general, Christ's view of bodily comforts?

2. THE SEARCHING OF PETER.

a) Contrast the Christ and the Peter of this chapter with the Christ and the Peter of ch. 18.

b) Study Peter's pliability, caution, devotion.

c) Study Christ's insight, insistence, frankness, supremacy.

d) Study love—its nature, its value, its energy, its efficiency.

## \* THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

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The Gospel of John is the Gospel of the manifestation of Christ. The opening sentences glow with that ineffable Light which in the Holy of Holies overhung the Mercy Seat between the cherubim: we behold "His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (1:14). John begins where the other evangelists end, with the rejection of Christ by the Jewish people: "He came unto His own and His own received Him not" (1:11). Throughout the Gospel the Jews and Jesus are arrayed against each other in uncompromising hostility. In the Synoptic Gospels all Christ's intercourse with His disciples until His last journey to Jerusalem is designed to answer the question, Who is the Son of Man (Matt. 16:15; Mark 8:29; Luke 9:20)? The nature and person of Christ as the Son of the living God having been revealed, He announces for the first time the method of redemption, by His death, burial and resurrection (Matt. 16:21; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22). But John's Gospel begins with the declaration of Christ's divine character and atoning work: in the first chapter He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world (1:29); on Him the angels of God are ascending and descending (1:51); He declares the character and secret actions of Nathanael (1:47-50); He needs not that any should tell Him of man, for He knows what is in man (2:25); He is the Son of Man who came down from Heaven and is in Heaven (3:13). The first miracle which John records is the Marriage feast (2:11); the first public act the cleansing of the Temple (2:16); the first discourse the revelation of the Heavenlies (3:12);—all pertaining to an order of things which comes only at the close of the other Gospels. In Christ's discourses to the Jews, in His prayer recorded in chapter 17, in the account of the crucifixion, the point of view is that of a finished work. The death on the cross is not so much the process of dying as the results of death; it is not defeat, but victory. In the other Gospels, when Christ speaks to His disciples of His approaching decease, He emphasizes His humiliation and suffering, His delivery to the Gentiles (Matt. 16:21; 20:18; Luke 18:32); here His death is voluntary, "No man taketh My life from Me but I lay it down of Myself" (10:18); it inheres in the relation He has assumed, "I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (10:11); it is the reason for His Father's special love, "Therefore doth My Father love Me because I lay down My life that I may take it again" (10:17, 18); and it results in universal appreciation, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (12:32). In this Gospel there is no account of the Transfiguration with its Moses and Elias, the encouragement for the coming Calvary. There are here no apprehensions of the cross, no Gethsemane; no angels strengthening Him. When the band of men and officers approach Him in the garden to apprehend Him, when He says, "I am He," they go backward and fall to the ground (18:6). Throughout the whole scene of the

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\* This and the following articles were contributed for the series in the press. One or two of these were received after the series were concluded.

crucifixion the same wonderful character is preserved. He does not receive testimony from men; no company of women bewail and lament Him; no Judas confesses, "I have betrayed the innocent blood"; no Pilate's wife says, "Have thou nothing to do with this just man"; no dying malefactor testifies, "This man has done nothing amiss"; no Roman centurion says, "Truly this man was the Son of God". And He who needed no help or sympathy or testimony from men or angels would have none from nature; in this Gospel we read nothing of rocks rending, or of the earth quaking, or of the darkness covering the land. From the cross is heard no cry, no prayer, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"—"Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit". He speaks but three words—the first, as if on a quiet death-bed, provides for His mother; the second is a fulfilment of Scripture; the third is the shout of the conqueror.

The final Gospel is the personal Gospel. The divine persons, Father, Son and Spirit, are presented in their order, each in His distinct sphere and each in His relation to the others. The personality of Christ, the personal character of the relations He sustains are everywhere emphasized. He speaks rather than acts (8:12). His fundamental assertion is, "I am—I am the Life, the Truth, the Way, the Vine, the Door, the Shepherd, the Resurrection". Few miracles are recorded, and the discourses are occupied with the nature of God, the essential oneness of Christ with the Father, the mystical union of Christ with His people. In the person of Christ all things find their fulfilment; not only the predictions of the Old Testament but the Old Testament itself; the Shekinah and the tabernacle (1:14); the temple (2:19-21); the ladder on which the angels of God ascend and descend (1:51); the serpent in the wilderness (3:14); the manna (6:32); the paschal lamb (1:20; 19:36); in Him all nature finds its fulfilment—life (1:4); light (1:9); water (4:10); bread (6:50); all offices and relationships—the vine (15:1); the door (10:7); the shepherd (10:14); the way (14:6). The reason and vindication of all Christ's actions are found in Himself. The eight miracles in this Gospel are, with a single exception (4:46-53), self-moved—wrought without any request from those to be benefitted, and in that exception the cure transcends the faith of the petitioner. In the discussion on the Sabbath there is no argument, as in the synoptics, from David or the temple, or the conduct of man: His one justification is, "My Father worketh until now, and I work" (v. 17). In the one thought of belief in Christ center all the requirements of God (6:28, 29). A personal relation to a personal Being comprises all that is necessary for perfect conduct and character; this meets every possibility of the soul (1:4); satisfies every desire (4:14); fills every capacity for time and eternity (6:35). The personality of the thought moulds the style of John; it shows itself in the avoidance of abstractions, in the absence of all reference to law as now in force, in the continual recurrence of the personal pronoun, in the precision and accuracy with which words are used, in the continual repetition of words which this precision requires, in the ever-recurring antithesis, in the scrupulous restriction of terms. Believers, *e. g.*, are the children of God; only Christ is the Son of God.

It is the universal Gospel, "All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made" (1:2); He "lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (1:9); He is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (1:29). "The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth" (v. 28).

The final Gospel is the Gospel of the essential and eternal. There is here no Sermon on the Mount, with its explanation of law; no Sermon on the Plain, with its ethical directions. In the conversations with Nicodemus (3:1-21), and with



the woman of Samaria (4:7-26), in the discussions and controversies with the Jews (chs. 6-10), in the farewell discourses with the disciples (chs. 13-16), there is no mention of duties which are by their nature restricted to this life. Directions with regard to conduct found in all the other Gospels disappear; the heavenly, the spiritual, and eternal are the subject of discourse. The church is viewed in the same light. Christ institutes no ordinances, ordains no apostles, appoints no officers. He breathes on the disciples the Holy Spirit which is to be the eternal life of the church (20:22). The Gospel begins with the declaration of the intrinsic nature of Christ, with His relation on the one hand to the uncreated and on the other to all that comes into being. The antagonisms are the ultimate and permanent—light and darkness, life and death. The relationships are not historic, but ideal (8:39). Times and places disappear; God is Spirit, and is worshipped in spirit and in truth (4:21-24); while Christ returns to the glory which He had with the Father before the world was (17:5).

## THE MOST REMARKABLE GOSPEL.

BY REV. DOREMUS A. HAYES, PH. D., S. T. D., LL. D.,

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The Fourth Gospel gives us no adequate biography of Jesus. It is too small a book. My Boswell's Life of Samuel Johnson has 1824 pages. The Life of Phillips Brooks on my library shelves has 1596 pages, and the Life of Henry Drummond 534 pages. The Life of our Lord by the Apostle John occupies less than 30 pages in my Revised Version; and yet John says that if all had been written which might have been written, the world itself could not contain all the books covering the theme. Evidently much has been left out. Some of the omissions are most remarkable.

John omits the whole record of the first thirty years of the life of Jesus, to begin with. He gives us no genealogy, no account of the annunciation, and he never suggests that there was such a thing as an immaculate conception. He tells us nothing about the infancy and youth of our Lord, nothing about His development of mind and soul, His early environment and teaching. These were the most important years of His life to Jesus Himself, but John says nothing about them!

Jesus meets John the Baptist at the Jordan, but the evangelist has told us nothing about the early life or ministry of the forerunner, as he tells us nothing about his later imprisonment and death!

There are some very capital events in the life of our Lord, which we would think any biographer would not fail to mention, as, for example, the temptation in the wilderness, the transfiguration, the institution of the Lord's Supper, the Gethsemane agony, and the ascension. John tells us about none of them!

There are no children in this Gospel, and there are no scribes, and no lepers, and no publicans!

There is no casting out of demons in this Gospel. His enemies say of Jesus, "He has a demon". But this unreal, falsely-charged, demoniacal possession is the only one recognized or mentioned in this book.

There are no eschatologies in this Gospel, such as we find in the Synoptics. Here, instead of their predictions of the Parousia, we have the promises of the Paraclete. The coming of the Comforter is substituted for the coming of the Judge and King.

There are no proverbs in this Gospel, and there are no parables! Jesus acts parables here, but He does not narrate them.

The Greek words for repentance and faith are not found in this book. These words represent chief themes in the other Gospels. John never uses the terms!

How could anybody write a Life of Jesus that would be of any account and omit all mention of the temptation, transfiguration and ascension, of the demons, and the lepers and the publicans, and the parables? Here is a most remarkable Gospel without any of these things.

Yet Origen said, "This Gospel is the consummation of the Gospels, as the

Gospels are of all the Scriptures". And Luther said, "This is the unique, tender, genuine, chief Gospel, far preferable to the other three. \* \* \* Should a tyrant succeed in destroying the Holy Scriptures, and only a single copy of the Epistle to the Romans and the Gospel according to John escape him, Christianity would be saved". Biedermann calls it "the most wonderful of all religious books". Another writer says, "It stands out from the other Gospels as the Sabbath from the other days of the week, as the office of the priesthood from the functions of the Levites, or like the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim, which was better than the vintage of Abiezer".

What gives the book its unique value? What makes it the most remarkable and the most valued of all the Gospels?

I. ITS ARTISTIC FORM. It has been called "the supreme literary work of the world". It observes all the finer laws governing the artistic composition of the ancient classical tragedies. As in these, the catastrophe is announced in the beginning, and the whole action of the narrative tends irresistibly toward the tragic close. As in the *Iliad* and the *Niebelungenlied*, and as in the tragedies of *Æschylus* and *Sophocles*, the terrible outcome is kept always in sight. The shadow of the cross falls athwart the first page. The certainty of the hero's horrible death confronts us at every turn. The first time the Man Jesus appears He is heralded as a Lamb appointed for sacrifice. At the marriage feast His "hour" is not yet come, but its dread significance is present in His mind. When He feeds the multitude, that joyous occasion is marred in their memory by His discourse on eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Most of the action is confined to the doomed city of Jerusalem. Galilee might lie bathed in the sunshine, filled with the glory of lilies and the singing of birds; but over Jerusalem the clouds were gathering, big with thunder, and the lightning flashes darted through them like travail-pains. John did not consciously compose a tragedy. He was telling a true story. He was recording a genuine biography. But in the telling he is artistic in fuller measure than the Synoptics ever were. In the recording he follows the laws of the highest literature. He gives life, color, movement to his narrative. His book has the freshness and the simplicity of the primitive masterpieces of the world's writing.

II. CONCENTRATION OF ACTION. Note how the action is concentrated in the progress of the story. There are two great divisions of the book. In the first division, chaps. 1-12, both time and place are manifold. The public ministry of Jesus touches the three provinces of the land and the three years of His activity. In the second division, chaps. 13-20, the action is centered in the one city of Jerusalem, and a large part of it is confined to one room; and the time is limited to one evening and a few days. More and more the scene narrows from the whole land to Judea, and from Judea to Jerusalem, and in Jerusalem to the one upper room of the farewell discourses; and the interest intensifies as the narrative lengthens and the crisis is nearer and nearer at hand.

III. SYMMETRY. The symmetry of the composition is noticeable in the recurrence of certain characters and the nice balancing of the parts. Nathanael's name appears in the preface and the appendix, in the introductory and in the concluding chapter, and nowhere else. The mother of Jesus is seen only in the beginning and at the end of the Gospel. At the opening of His public ministry Jesus attends a feast with His disciples and gives a demonstration of His power. At the end of His ministry He is again at a supper with His disciples, and He gives to them a demonstration of His love.

IV. CONTRASTS. This balancing of parts over against each other is accompanied by continuous contrasts throughout the narrative. The great contrast be-



tween Faith and Unbelief runs through the whole book, and the new characters, as they are introduced, range themselves alternately between believers and unbelievers, friends and foes. First, the spying, critical representatives of the Pharisees, then the faithful and obedient disciples of John. The blinded leaders of the people stand over against the seeing blind man with his bold witness to the Messiahship of Jesus. The confession of Peter contrasted with the betrayal of Judas. The raising of Lazarus to life results in the dooming of Jesus to death. These contrasts occur in every chapter and help to give to the narrative its striking variety.

V. ITS STRIKING VARIETY. 1. Notice the variety of the seasons presented in this Gospel. In the beginning of the activity of Jesus it is the Spring, the time of the sowing of seed and the germination and growth of the grain. Later in the narrative we come upon the Autumn and the feast of the ingathering of the fruits in the Fall. Then at the very height of the conflict between Jesus and the Jews we are expressly told that it was Winter. Finally, with the resurrection and the glorification of Jesus, it is the Spring again. 2. A great variety is added to the composition by the alternation of incident and interlude, of story and sermon, of action and discourse. In the beginning we have two pictures introducing the light side and the dark side of the public ministry, the marriage feast at Cana, and the scourging of the sellers in the temple. These two vivid presentations are followed by two conversations, one in the darkness of the night and the other in the glare of the full noonday, with Nicodemus and with the woman at the well. Through the Gospel there is this alternation of word and deed. At the end, there are the solemn discourses with the disciples, followed by the still more solemn incidents of the trial and crucifixion. There is a constant changing from action to speech and from the brighter to the darker aspects of the history. There is a continuous variety that never allows the interest to flag. It is an artistic composition as well as a narrative true to the life.

VI. IDEAL GROUPING. John had an incalculable wealth of material, from which he has made a selection of scenes and sermons that will fit in with His purpose and be most suitable to his plan. It is in this selection and arrangement of material that the literary artist, as well as the saint and the seer, appears. He has brought this wonderful fulness of words and works into an amazingly brief compass. He has omitted all that seemed to him accidental or unessential. He has united the ideal moments of the life of Jesus into one harmonious presentation of the Ideal Life. He has made a work of art as well as a Gospel of the Son of God.

VII. SPIRITUAL INSIGHT. John was a literary artist and he was a saint. This is the Gospel of Spiritual Insight. It has more of the words of Christ, and it has more of the mind of Christ, than any other. It has the most profound depths of thought in most simple and clear expression. It has reached the hearts of men in all the Christian centuries, and it will be regarded by them as the most remarkable and the most valuable of the Gospels to the very end of time.

## "IN THE BEGINNING".

BY REV. JAMES LEE MITCHELL, PH. D.,

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Along the northern boundary of the United States, bordering upon lower Canada, runs a low line of hills called the Laurentian mountains—the first land that ever lifted itself above the great deep, the beach of an otherwise boundless ocean. Whether the Garden of Eden was there I do not know, but it is certain these hills were the beginning of land, the beginning of life upon the earth. Is it this beginning then to which John refers when he says, "In the beginning was the Word"?

There is an earlier beginning than this that we know about. Geology reports long eras before even those Laurentian hills made their appearance, nebulous ages, ages of cooling and condensation; and a voice speaking long before John's said, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth",—a beginning that before ever there was even an ocean for the Laurentian hills to rise above, a beginning in utter formlessness. Is it that beginning to which John refers when he says, "In the beginning was the Word"?

To John's vision the creation was a modern incident, a current event, an associated press dispatch of a happening in time. John's beginning was a beginning before the creation, a beginning before there was a beginning, a beginning before there was a time in which to begin. The "In the beginning" of Genesis is the mere "once upon a time" of the story teller. The "In the beginning" of John is that point of light in the fathomless depth of eternity which always has been. If you would put this date down in your history book, you must start that book with eternity.

Is it history? That is the question that rises right here. Is it history or the flight of poetic imagination? What right has any man, the infinitesimal fragment of a race whose generic life is a mere wink in these infinite distances, to date his narrative "in the beginning"? What can he know of the beginning? A few lines later "there was a man sent from God whose name was John",—there starts the indubitable record of an eye-witness; but this "in the beginning"—he was not an eye-witness of that. There is not even a pretence that he is following records or traditions either; and certainly he is not speculating, for there is not a prefatory word such as the most confident philosopher would feel bound to use. He writes as one who knew, and knew what could not be disputed. "In the beginning was the Word". Surely this man is writing history, not poetry nor philosophy.

But how did he know it? Why doesn't he tell us how he knew it? For he must know also that this is a tremendous statement for anybody to make or to receive. The answer is that all Ephesus knew how he knew it, and all those that ever would read his Gospel would know how he knew it. Was he not John? No! not John. John was the man of long ago buried in the dark before the dawn. Was he not the disciple whom Jesus loved, the intimate friend of that Word who was there in the beginning, saturated still with His spirit? Did not all the world

know of his experience on Patmos? Indeed the line which introduces the Apocalypse, "I was in the spirit", is the introduction to all John's writing. It is all revelation from God. In short the historical integrity of this first verse of John's, which antedates every other verse in the Bible, and every other fact of science, rests on the historical integrity of Jesus. Jesus being what He claimed to be, and what His words and works prove Him to be, His intimate friend was of course perfectly competent to write the first verse of the first chapter of John without other introduction. Yes, we have here an historical date antedating all other dates — "In the beginning".

Well, what in the beginning? "In the beginning was the Word". Matthew takes pains to trace Christ's genealogy for us to Abraham. Mark, the first written and most consecutively historic of the Gospels, shows His life as the fulfilment of prophecy. Luke traces Christ's genealogy to Adam, for Luke's conception of Christ is as humanity's Saviour. He is the one promised to the mother of all. But John deals not with Adam, refers not to Abraham, takes no pains to strengthen his position with prophecies in time, passes by the creation as though it were an event of yesterday, penetrates the eternal past and shows us Jesus as one with the infinite Father. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God".

Extremely interesting arguments and so simple that a child can understand them have been formed to show that Jesus was not the product of His times. None but a legal expert with a case to make out of nothing ever supposed that He was. He is the antithesis of His times. At every step He does violence to Judaism, the land and ideas in the midst of which He was born. He is absolutely unaccountable, the despair of evolution, an evolution which starts with the world. He is the product of His times or all times about as much as the spring is the product of winter's ice and snow.

These have their purpose and the spring follows them, but the spring is not of them. Spring is from her own source of light and heat. John, not less historic than the historians but more so, not less scientific than the scientists but more so, reaches back, out and up to that real source whence Jesus was, and of whose passion He can be indeed the natural, the scientific, the historic product. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God". The world's spring-time is not of the world's winter, but of that warm core of Eternity—God.

There is a nautical term which beautifully describes the position of this verse of the great evangel in its relation to our poor plodding confusions, our utter failures to get a real start — "cleared". When a vessel has got all through with unloading and loading cargoes, with troublesome landsmen and agents, with docks and tugs and officialdom's red tapes, cast off her last cable and turned her prow to the great free seas, she is spoken of as "cleared". John wrote that Gospel in the midst of as wild a shrieking of human voices, as mad a confusion of human thoughts as ever was. If ever worldly businesses and rocky despairs and narrow channels and official humanities surrounded anything, they surrounded that Gospel, but at the very first verse it cleared for the eternities. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was God". It cleared "in spite of rock and tempest's roar, in spite of false lights on the shore". The centuries have not called it back, nor the seas washed it down. There is not, nor ever will be, anything better for us than to follow in its white wake out to sea.

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Is it not great for you and me who are not great scientists nor mighty think-



ers and yet must start somewhere, must have a foundation for thought and hope somewhere, if there is to be any manhood in us, to have this unshakable verse, a secret knowledge from the heart of God to our hearts? "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was God." I once lived in a room where the sun rose before it was morning. Before my window a glorious old steeple shot its fearless spire hundreds of feet up into the sky and caught the sun's beams before it was over the city's horizon and flung them down into my room. Many a humble heart this day walks in faith because of this majestic high Gospel. It flings down into the depths of the soul some of the light of the yet unrisen sun of perfect vision.

## A LESSON IN METHODS.

\*BY REV. EDWIN M. POTREAT, D. D.,

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The Gospel of John may be conceived as a manual of method in Christian work. Just after the temptation in the wilderness (Matt. 4: 1-11) our Lord appears a second time in the Jordan valley to begin His work. In the wilderness He had seen great visions, and the horizon around Him widened until it embraced all the kingdoms of the world; and He knew them to be His.

How now will He begin to enact His claim? How will He announce His Messiahship? When men see Him again will they see Him assuming the title and the prerogatives of the Prince of Israel? No; it is a day of small things which succeeds the day of great visions. In the Jordan valley He is seen walking alone, then talking with two men, then with three others. And thus is ushered in the work of the world's Teacher and Saviour.

This way of going to work on a world enterprise was either consummate folly or supreme wisdom. That it was a deliberately chosen method appears from the rest of the Gospel of John, which is largely taken up with private interviews and the direct results of these. Chapter 3 is occupied with Nicodemus; chapter 4 is occupied with the woman of Samaria; chapter 5 is occupied with the man at the pool of Bethesda, and a king's officer; chapter 9 is occupied with a man born blind; chapter 11 is occupied with Lazarus; chapter 12 is occupied with certain Greeks; chapters 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 are occupied with the Twelve; and chapter 21 is occupied with Peter and John. Thus we see how large a share of His attention our Lord bestowed upon individuals. A group of fishermen, a leading citizen, a woman of the street, a king's officer, a hospital cripple, a blind man, a sick friend—these, in their turn, are given all the heart and help of the Son of Man. And in chapter 7, His brothers, impatient of His method, are insisting that He must get out among the people more, and make a more public display of His powers.

In the method He adopted to accomplish His work, we have two things:—

*a.* Our Lord's estimate of the individual. Jesus Christ discovered the single soul, and stamped its value. He said it was worth more than all the world of things. Before He taught, the individual was hardly more than a grain of sand in a sand hill. After He had spoken men saw the awful halo of personal accountability encircling the head of every member of the race.

*b.* The true method of propagandism. The only way for anything to spread through the living organism of humanity—whether an idea, a plague, a salvation—is by personal contact. And the results of our Lord's method are an abundant vindication of His wisdom in choosing it. Trace these results, for example, in the case of John, who had his first interview with his Lord there in the Jordan valley, and who lived to give the world the Gospel we are studying. Or take Peter as your example, and recall Pentecost and the subsequent history.

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Thus while individuals occupy the foreground and seem to absorb the Saviour's attention, crowding up behind them, coming to its light, we see the world.

#### A LESSON.

If this was the method of our Lord, it is the true method for us, His disciples, "Individual work for individuals", as Dr. H. Clay Trumbull put it in the title of his charming little book. Our low estimate of the individual lurks in every such excuse as "There's nothing I can do!" But you can win a child to Christ. That seems to us a small thing—yet a little weaver lad, the only one received into the church at Blantyre in a year, grew to be David Livingstone.



## THE CONDITION OF ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

### AN EXPOSITION OF ST. JOHN 3: 1-16.

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The precise nature of the Kingdom of God baffles definition. Our Saviour began His preaching with the theme, "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand"; and He had this kingdom as the principal subject of His teaching all through His earthly ministry. Although students of the New Testament can not agree as to the content of this expression, "Kingdom of God", it can not be said that we know nothing of it. The teachings of our Saviour and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit have not been in vain. This kingdom is so great and grand that our earthly words fail to encompass it. It is a heavenly kingdom and has its origin in God. We know something about it just as we know something about God Himself; and we may know more and more if we fully follow the light that is before us, and are true to the God that loves us.

In the third chapter of the Gospel according to John, our Saviour is speaking of entrance into this kingdom. Two fundamental errors in regard to citizenship in the kingdom were cherished by the men of that day as well as of this. (1) It is hard to become a citizen of the kingdom, and (2) it is easy to become a citizen of the Kingdom of God. Contradictory as these statements may seem, they are both alike errors, as may be inferred from the words of our Lord.

The moral man thinks that entering into the kingdom is so easy that he almost fails to consider the question of entrance for himself.

Nicodemus, a doctor of the law, was greatly interested in the teaching of the new prophet from Galilee. He was doubtless a very devout man, and was naturally moved by the evident sincerity of Jesus and His earnestness of purpose. He came therefore by night to express approval of this young Teacher and His work, and to inquire further of His teaching. He took it for granted that he, himself, as well as all other good Israelites were already within the Kingdom of God. Were they not the children of Abraham? Were they not the chosen people of God?

Nicodemus was startled when Jesus said to him, "Except one be born from above he can not see the Kingdom of God". Students have been long discussing the meaning of the word which King James' translators rendered, "again", and our American Revisers, "anew". The former translation certainly failed of expressing the meaning of the word; we must choose between the renderings, "anew" or "from above". The characteristic feature of the birth referred to is not that it is another, but that it is of a different origin.

In his amazement that anything should be required of him, Nicodemus grasps at the idea of birth and ignores or misapprehends the adverb. Even according to the tenor of the foolish question which Nicodemus asks, the requirement is stupendous,—to think that a man must be born again in order to enter the Kingdom of God. But this new birth is of a higher character than the earthly and physical.

"As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God,—even to those who believed upon His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God". There could be no merit or utility in rebirth in a physical sense, even if such a thing were possible. The new birth of which Jesus speaks is of the Spirit.

A new principle and motive of life must enter into the nature of man: in fact his nature must be changed. We are very apt to think of this statement as applying to a heathen Chinaman or to a cannibal of the Southern seas, or perhaps to the criminal and drunkard of our own land. But Jesus was speaking to one of the most cultured and religious men of his time, a Pharisee, a member of the Sanhedrin. This condition, we may be sure, rests upon every one. No matter how refined a man is, no matter how moral, no matter how devoted to the law, he must be born from above in order to inherit the Kingdom of God and attain new life, the real life.

This new life is of the Holy Spirit, and is therefore independent of every earthly element; it is within the soul, a life from God. We are not, however, to ignore the fact that our Saviour uses another word along with *Spirit* in v. 5. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except one be born of water and the Spirit, he can not enter the Kingdom of God". Although the new birth is entirely spiritual it is associated with an external element. Jesus does not intend to speak of two distinct means in bringing about this birth. It is a mistake to translate as King James' version, "Of water and of the Spirit". The water is the subordinate, external, and, perhaps, merely figurative element. We may speak of the birth of the Spirit; but we can not properly speak of the birth of water. Christian baptism is to be exalted because of its symbolical reference; but it is not to be unduly made prominent, because its efficacy,—its very reality indeed, depends upon the presence of the personal Holy Spirit. The doctrine of baptismal regeneration, or the teaching that baptism is a saving ordinance is not of God but of man. Simon Magus was baptized; but Peter said to him, "Thou hast no part nor lot in this matter".

Our Saviour enforces the truth that this new birth,—the entrance into the kingdom,—is not of man but of God by referring to the phenomenon of the wind. "The wind bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit". We can not see nor understand the wind: but we can observe that which is occasioned by it, and so believe its existence, even if we can not explain it.

Shall we conclude then, that entrance into the Kingdom of God is altogether beyond our control and so no occasion of thought for us? Shall we despair at once because the new birth is from above and not of ourselves? Our Saviour evidently intended to teach Nicodemus that entrance into the kingdom was not as easy as he supposed, but He had no desire to lead him into the opposite error. He gave a shock to his present feeling of security in order that he might come to a realization of his own lack.

The great mistake of many a poor sinner in regard to entrance into the kingdom is that the way is by far too difficult for him, and that he might as well despair at once. But there is another aspect of the commencement of the new life that appeals directly to the activity of those who would enter. Continuing His teaching to Nicodemus, our Lord says, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in Him have eternal life". Belief in a crucified Saviour is the way into the Kingdom of God. The promise is broad and the condition is in the heart of the one who would enter: *Whosoever believeth*.

The Evangelist John adds a word of explanation, which is indeed an epitome

of the whole message of Good News,—the Little Gospel, as Martin Luther calls it. “For God so loved the World, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life”.

From the human point of view the one requisite for entrance into the Kingdom of God is faith,—that is, belief in the promises of God and acceptance of them. Faith is not mere credence. An intellectual belief in the statements of the Holy Scriptures with no acceptance of them is no faith at all. Faith in Jesus means nothing less than an active trust in Him, a personal allegiance to Him as Lord and Master.

Some have wondered that we have in John 3 : 16 no mention of repentance, and indeed that Jesus spoke to Nicodemus nothing about repentance. This omission is not because repentance is not needed : it is alluded to in the reference to the water of baptism, and is involved in faith. The teaching of John the Baptist was for Pharisees as well as for others. The cultured doctor of the law that came to Jesus by night must enter the kingdom by the same door as any other man. It is impossible that one should really accept Jesus as Master,—that is, have faith in Him, and still cling to sin. He Himself says, “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon”. As long as we try to serve both, we are serving only the latter ; and as soon as we have the genuine purpose to serve God alone, we have not only ceased to serve the god of this world but have turned our backs upon him.

With this understanding of the conditions of entrance into the kingdom, we need not fear to say that our citizenship is of our own choice. We have felt our lost condition and have accepted the promise. We have repented of our sins and have entered into eternal life. On the other hand we must say also, we know of a surety that salvation is not of ourselves. “For by grace have ye been saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2 : 8). We have been born from above, we have passed from death into life, surely not by any power of our own, but through the Holy Spirit. He looked upon our low estate and has lifted us up. Our Redeemer, the Son of God has left His exalted place and emptied Himself. He took upon Himself frail flesh, lived among men, suffered, and died upon the cross. He was buried in Joseph’s tomb ; He arose from the dead, and ever liveth at the right hand of God to intercede for us.

There is but one condition of entrance into the Kingdom of God, although this condition has two aspects. We are saved through acceptance of the redemption wrought for us.



## \* THE GOSPEL OF THE CONVERSATIONS.

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The Gospel of John may be called the Gospel of the Conversations, for, more than any other, it reports particular interviews of our Lord with individuals. In the first chapter we have the conversation with Nathanael; in the second, with the mother of Jesus: in the third, with Nicodemus; in the fourth, with the woman of Samaria: and passing by others less striking, we have the interviews with Mary and Martha, and the words spoken at the Supper: until after the Resurrection, the history closes with question and answer, as they passed between our Lord and Mary Magdalene, and Thomas, and finally with Peter and John.

These conversations, too, are real conversations, for Jesus was not like some famous men, who discourse in monologue. Even His addresses to the multitude were often interrupted by the inquiries or remarks of others, and, in smaller companies He guided the conversation, while apparently taking the lesser part. The "golden silences" of Jesus are very marked, and George Borrow, in that fascinating book, "*The Bible in Spain*," relates that the taciturn people of the little Republic of Andorra noticed these silences, and said of them, "Jesus played the Andorran." While He spoke with authority, yet He dispelled all feeling of restraint, and even seemed to awaken in others unwonted freedom. Not unfrequently He gave the thought, and let them do the talking. He had the rare quality of a good listener, and He heard with such deep penetration that His answers, as is sometimes plainly stated, were directed to the thoughts of men rather than to their words.

It is often said that Jesus was the greatest of preachers, but not so often that He preferred to converse. Then indeed He appears to have been most truly Himself, when, in direct appeal to some individual heart, or in the effort to comfort or instruct a few, He utters those great sayings which shine like the fixed stars in the firmament. He never appears to have saved anything for a large audience, nor feared that any utterance of truth, breathed into the receptive heart of however humble a hearer, could fail of its effect. Thus, if you would seek for the doctrines of Jesus, the great and distinctive revelations which mark His career on earth, you will find them in His private interviews with Nicodemus, and the sisters of Bethany, and the woman of Samaria.

And these conversations all have a personal turn. They attach great principles to common life, and they lead people through their own needs to the grandest spiritual truths. Jesus evidently has confidence in the living power of truth, and therefore does not press it, but leaves His hearers to follow out the idea and make the application for themselves. We are surprised at the dialogue which is taken up with the sayings of others, until we learn the germinant power of Jesus' words, and see them, as it were, growing before our eyes in other minds.

With the woman of Samaria, Jesus opens the conversation with a simple request. He asks a favor, almost the only one that is recorded of His asking, and

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the smallest that could be asked. Thus throwing Himself on her sympathy, and willing to be dependent on her for the relief of His manifest weariness, He opens the way for interchange of thought. But the prejudice that is strong in her people cannot be repressed, and she utters it not scornfully, but with a feeling of surprise. Indifferent to this narrow prejudice, and seeing that the time is not yet come to overthrow it, our Lord passes into what we may call the beautiful parable of "The Water of Life," which the woman, taking half literally, and in deep amazement at the power of His speech, answers with a counter petition, that He would give her this water, "that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw." The favor that Jesus asked is forgotten. The relation is changed, or rather, each has shown a willingness to trust the other, which is the closest bond of sympathy. But Jesus, perceiving that He has made no definite impression upon her, save that of friendliness and a curious interest, turns suddenly to the woman with the personal command, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither"; and when she denies the existence of such a relationship, He turns the leaves of her past history with an unsparing hand. To all this she humbly rejoins, as being no longer able to evade the truth, "Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet": and then, as if still wishing to turn the conversation, she hastens to recall the distinction between her own people and the Jews. We can almost see her confusion, which she attempts to hide in this manner. Coleridge somewhere says that "Multitudes never blush," and that it is safer to appeal to the honor and conscience of an individual than to a crowd. At any rate, she drops the subject, but the thought still lingers in her mind. The personal matter is the central point of the conversation, as we shall afterwards more clearly see; and yet she prepares for herself a further humiliation by bringing up the great subject of dispute between the Jews and the Samaritans.

And now our Lord, referring no more to the personal charge which He has brought home to her conscience, addresses her with a sublimity rising to the height of His grandest utterances, describing the nature of worship, and the approach to the Father that is open to every longing heart in all the world. But in the midst of it He meets and overthrows the prejudice which she first introduced, and sweeps it out of the way with a lofty and decisive sentence that leaves no room for answer: "Ye worship ye know not what. We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews". Why does she not resent this humbling sentence? Why does not her Samaritan hatred rise in defiance, as it would have done, one must think, had Jesus thus addressed her at the first? Ah, it is because of that stroke with which He had smitten her conscience when He laid bare the deformity of her past life. She has no heart to contend against this. Her quick intuition brings up the thought of the promised Messiah, and the revelation of herself that He has made compels her to answer with docility, "When He is come, He will tell us all things". What does she refer to? What is in her mind as she gives this answer, half musingly? The great and spiritual truths of which Jesus has spoken? Yes, but much more the revelation of her own heart and life. She may seek to change the subject; our Lord may forbear, as He did, to press it any further, but the arrow has hit the mark and clings to the wound. The revelation of the Christ to her, as to every one, is in what He has told her of herself. This is what Paul means by "being apprehended" of the Christ. And that we have in this the true impression that was made on her mind appears from her own description of the interview: "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did. Can this be the Christ?"

Here is the triumph of the conversation, that she had been made to see herself, and acknowledge the heart-searching power of the Redeemer. Says Thomas à Kempis, "It asketh great skill to know how to hold converse with Jesus"; but

he adds, "Be thou humble and peaceable, and Jesus will be with thee." In accepting His searching rebuke, she has discovered the glory of His character and mission.

If, then, we would understand the effect of our Lord's conversation with the woman of Samaria, we must read it in the message she bore to her people: "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did. Can this be the Christ?" She says nothing of His promise of never-failing water, nor of His grand sentences about worship, still less of His being a Jew and proclaiming their superiority. The one thought which fills her mind, and gives a glow and a fascination to her report that cannot be resisted, is what He has told her of herself. This is her message, her watchword, so to speak, that passed from lip to lip as she hurried on among her townfolk, so that we read: "Many of the Samaritans of that city believed on Him for the saying of the woman, 'He told me all that ever I did'".

It were hardly needful to bring into clearer light those principles of human nature which are here involved. We need a friend who knows us altogether, and to whom we can be perfectly joined. Such sympathy and a thorough comprehension are vainly sought in mere human relations. As says the author of the "Christian Year":

"Not even the tenderest heart, and next our own,  
Knows half the reasons why we smile or sigh".

This thorough comprehension our Lord Jesus only can supply. He knows every thought and feeling, He holds the threads of our past life, seeing every error, every crime. And He is ready to interweave His own love and knowledge, upon which we may rest. He interprets with personal love and power the language of the writer of the 139th Psalm: "O Lord, Thou hath searched me and known me. \* \* \* Thou understandest my thought afar off. \* \* \* Thou art acquainted with all my ways".

It seems at first a startling hyperbole, that the woman should have gone through the town saying to every one, "He told me all that ever I did". Why, it was but a single sentence in which He had spoken of her personal relations. But there was no other way to describe the truth. How tame, and false even, had she said, "He knows some things about me", or, "He knows the chief things": for His knowledge covers all and admits no less a compass than this—"He told me all that ever I did".

The truth which is here made known to us and answers to every Christian experience is, that Jesus reveals to us the hidden life. He enters our consciousness, and becomes another self within us. A little child, tired of play, sits down by his mother, and she tells him something that happened years ago; stories of his infant days, and of his little brothers and sisters, and of the household pets. He is amazed that she can tell so much of what has gone on about him; that she knows more of him than even he does himself. From other lips he would scarcely believe it true; but he listens, with rapt amazement, to some story of the earliest opening of his mind, and when it ceases, he cries out, "Tell that again". This is the nearness of a mother's love. It is a consciousness that enwraps our own; a memory that encloses ours, and holds it in custody. What we were from the first, and what were the earliest movements of thought and feeling—these are in her keeping more than our own. But there is a higher than human consciousness that enwraps ours. There is a deeper love, as there is a more far-reaching knowl-



edge. It is Jesus who comes and sits by us, as He sat on the well of Sychar; and into our ears He pours the story of our life — the wasted hours, the false and selfish passions, the unthinking chase after worthless toys. To us, also, He will reveal all things. Rightly listening, we shall say, with humble yet with glad surprise, “He told me all that ever I did”.

Thus Jesus becomes another self within us. There is that familiarity of intercourse which is the highest delight of the soul. And He does not hesitate to use figures regarding it which present the simplest picture of intimate acquaintance with us. “Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with Me”. It is no class of men, no favored few, to whom He offers His inmost heart: but to each, in just the present state of character and knowledge, with the faults of to-day still cleaving, with the crimes and follies of the past still in memory. Nor can He ever afterward reject us because of past shame; for the first thing He does is to tell us all that we ever did. Other friends might grow cold when they came to know our history: our past associations and misdeeds might alienate them or breed disgust: but not so with Jesus. He knows us altogether, and, accepting Him, we enter into full fellowship with a forgiving and faithful Lord.

This perfect knowledge of the Christ is our greatest safeguard. It is needful, to defend us from plunging farther into sin, that we have the confidence of a loving Saviour. When we are on the verge of temptation, the thought that He knows and grieves over our past sins may win us back. When ready to despair of His favor, or to think it impossible that such as we should be accepted or enabled to do anything for His honor, we may remind ourselves that, when He gave us the invitation to repent, He weighed the full burden of our transgressions. He did not undertake a work of which He knew not the magnitude. With joy we may press close to our hearts the saying of the woman, “He told me all that ever I did”.

The conversation of Jesus with the woman at the well throws light on the subject of confession. That the practice of auricular confession, which prevailed in the Mediæval church, had a basis in the sincere longing of the penitent, there is no doubt. Indeed, confession was regarded as a part of repentance, or at least the outward manifestations of it. The danger arose from magnifying the outward until it absorbed and drew away the life of the inward. This could hardly be otherwise, since human confessors are too prone to claim authority, and the idea of having fulfilled a painful task makes men imagine that their guilt is relieved. But when the confessional is abolished, there remains often a slavish view of repentance, which takes away its true blessedness. Some are troubled because they know not how long they ought to repent. Ought they to mention in words every sin they have ever committed? If they forget or omit any, will God pardon? If they do not rightly estimate the guilt of all, and consider some their chief sins which are not so, will God have patience with their mistakes?

How happily is all this relieved when we learn the noon-day lesson taught at the well of Sychar, that it is the Christ who reveals us to ourselves! It is not for you to find out your sin, but for Him to reveal it to you. With the Psalmist, you ask God to search you, “that you may be led in the way everlasting”. You are to become acquainted with your own heart by having Him read it to you: and all you can tell Him will be of that which He has told you before. Repentance now loses its bitterness, because it is the revelation of the Christ. “Once”, says Luther, “I thought no word so bitter as repentance: now there is none more sweet, and those passages in the Bible that used to terrify me now smile and sport about me”. In the same spirit, Augustine says, in his “Confessions”, “I will

now call to mind my past foulness and the carnal corruptions of my soul: not because I love them, but that I may love Thee, O my God. For love of Thy love I do it; reviewing my most wicked ways in the very bitterness of my remembrance, that Thou mayst grow sweet unto me". The power of such a revelation of the Christ is manifest in the fact, that the largest harvest of souls ever gathered while on earth was reaped in the two days He spent at Sychar. A soul brought face to face with Him, beholding His glory by being self-revealed, is a fit instrument to convey to others the advent of the Christ. Here is the song of Bethlehem, "Peace and good will". The woman waits not for a full rehearsal of all the windings of her guilt, for He has known and felt it all.

For us there is the same freedom of approach. Listening to Him, you also, shall learn to confess. Receiving into your heart His love and sympathy, your lips shall be opened to tell Him every want and grief, and prayer shall be only the communion of kindred minds. The saying of the woman shall become your saying, "He told me all that ever I did".

## THE PRINCIPLE OF MISSIONS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

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There are many motives for missions, among which we may mention:—

1. The imperial motive of loyalty to the king (Matt. 28: 19).
2. The theological motive (Luke 14: 19, 10) of the "lost" condition of men.
3. The philanthropic motive (Matt. 22: 39) of the wish to share what we have with others.
4. The fiduciary motive (Matt. 10: 8a) of stewardship of what we have (Matt. 24: 45-51).
5. The biological motive which is emphasized in the Fourth Gospel.

John refers to the "Kingdom of God" only twice. (1) In the account of the talk with Nicodemus, who was looking for a kingdom (3: 3, 5), and (2) in the account of the trial before Pilate (18: 33-38), when our Lord is answering a charge of sedition.

According to the first three Gospels the great blessing brought by the King to the world was the Kingdom of God. How natural, then, for them to record those imperial words in which the Holy Monarch commands His followers to conquer the world. According to the Fourth Gospel, the great blessing brought by "the life which was the light of men" is everywhere described by the writer as eternal life, or the life of the Eternal One in us. From this conception he gets his favorite word life. How natural that he should carefully observe the workings of that life which is from above, when it enters into human hearts! His Gospel is a study in spiritual biology. What the synoptists conceive of as the spreading of a kingdom, John contemplates as the reproduction of a life. "The Kingdom of God is like" is the great parabolic preface in the first three Gospels which introduces us to a wealth of analogies from many realms of organic existence. No such verbal herald announces a coming simile in the Fourth Gospel. John leads us immediately into the presence of life. He records not parables, but incidents; not figures which illustrate separate functions, but facts that unfold to our delighted eyes the life itself, active in all its functions. Indeed, his entire narrative is a missionary document of the most striking character. He avows this and nothing else as his purpose. "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His name" (John 20: 30, 31).

All life (a) organizes itself, (b) grows by assimilation of externals, (c) wastes in the exercise of selection, (d) reproduces itself. In the last of these functions we find the missionary principle according to John's Gospel. Let us take some illustrations:—

(1) John 1. The first chapter is in part missionary autobiography. It records introductions and reproductions. On a Sunday morning the Baptist stood with two of his disciples on the river bank. He loses no time in pointing his companions to "The Lamb of God". They leave the guidepost to follow "the way",



and the same day discover the Messiah. What is the first impulse that masters these new disciples of Jesus? Each runs with haste to find his own brother. It is a race of rivals. Andrew first finds his brother. He brings Simon to Jesus, and does a good day's work for the world.

Again, Jesus finds Philip, and at once Philip finds Nathanael. Not a day is allowed to pass. With noble words, the fullest meaning of which he could not have understood, he affirms that Moses and the prophets wrote of Jesus. When objection is made to Nazareth as a source of good, the only answer is that born from experience, and calling to experiment, "Come and see".

Why is it that on the opening day of the ministry of our Lord these four men begin their effort to bring others? No "Great Commission" had been uttered, no hope of reward had been stimulated, no crowns or thrones had been offered, no punishment had been threatened for the fruitless. Not a motive usually urged today for evangelistic work and missionary activity had been revealed. So far as the narrative gives light, their eager words and swift feet and cordial hands were the pure expressions of that spontaneous, free, automatic new life which had begun to throb in their hearts. This new life, uncultured, deficient in true apprehension of the Messiah, but strong in its vitality, begins by asserting its reproductive instinct. It will have another. So close is the bond between finding for one's self and finding another, that the birthday of the church is its first missionary day also. The church and the propaganda were born together. Its initial impulse is evangelistic. This propagating instinct controls their souls at the same time that their affection for Jesus awakes. We are convinced after reading in v. 41 the glorious "Eureka", "I have found Him", that immediately afterward we will read, "And he brought him to Jesus". Apostles are evolved from disciples, as the full corn in the ear from the seed. So normally does bringing grow out of finding, so organically does missionary work develop as the bloom, flower and fruit of discipleship. It is only the beautiful effort to reproduce in others the joy we ourselves have experienced. "That which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life \* \* \* declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1: 1-3). So this John writes a half century afterward concerning the motive of His life, begotten on that first day.

(2) John 4. Nearly a year after this time, Jesus "must needs" go through Samaria. Beside the historic well He meets a woman. Absolutely no tangential point existed between the Christ and this woman but their common desire for water. Through this coincident want, in a conversation matchless for delicacy and tact, He reveals Himself as the Messiah. All consciousness of her purpose at the well is eclipsed for the moment, as truly as the hunger of the preacher is forgotten in His ministry to the single, needy heart. She leaves her waterpot, enters Sychar, and becomes the first city missionary mentioned in the New Testament. She is not content with relating experiences, but must couple with them an invitation. It is the same old story of the automatic life—"Come and see". The crowds follow. In great procession the people stream out of the city gates, and, beholding them, Jesus points His disciples to the opportunity, and says: "The fields are white unto the harvest". The very figure He uses suggests the sowing and reaping. This is indeed what had occurred. There was no command to the woman. No more unlikely field for missionary work was ever entered than Samaria. Yet no miracle was worked there to prepare for or authenticate the message. The agitation of the city arose from the earnest and profound impulse of one soul to bring others.

There was the instinct of vitality to reproduce in them the same consciousness which she herself possessed. The story of the first chapter of John is thus repeated in the fourth chapter. The steps in both are (a) hospitality to testimony, (b) investigation, (c) experience and (d) proclamation of truth. All honest hearing ends in preaching.

(3) John 9. A man born blind was healed. He knew Jesus only as healer. With what superb wit he refutes the charge that Jesus was a sinner, and what magnificent confidence underlies his creed concerning his benefactor. Severe cross-questioning, acute efforts to entangle him in criticism of Jesus, all fail. Asked once more about his blessing, he begins to preach, "I have told you and ye did not hear, why do you wish to hear it again? Do you also wish to become His disciples?" What are the steps of his ascent from receptivity to activity? A blind man, a healed man with an invincible experience, a witness and an advocate. These are the stages of his swift progress. He will not wait for the belated philosophy of his blessing. His vital experience flies on rushing wings to bear the tidings of blessing, and gratefully to win other hearts to love his deliverer, while his slow theology is putting on its shoes. All the more forceful is this incident as an illustration of our principle, because not until after his appealing question did he believe on Jesus as the Son of God. The impulse immediately follows the blessing and precedes the enlightenment. He would have others know what he had discovered. Once more, in the ninth chapter, faith is fruitful, and to the list of the Judean Baptist, the Galilean sons of Zebedee, Andrew and Philip, and the woman of Samaria, we must add the Jerusalem blind man as illustrations of our principle.

(4) John 12. On the last Tuesday of Jesus' life certain Hellenes, or pure Greeks, not proselytes, desire to see Jesus. The same Philip who found Nathanael is ready to lead them to the Great Teacher. Here again, as in the first chapter, we find together introduction and reproduction. Of what did Jesus speak to them? Of that which filled His mind at the time. What words convey His view of the great event on Calvary? When He speaks to Nicodemus, the Jewish ruler, He chooses a familiar illustration from Hebrew history: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up". But to those Greeks, who probably cared little for that history, He speaks the great parable of nature. "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die it abideth by itself alone, but if it die it beareth much fruit". "So it is with life" He continues: "whoever saves but does not sow his life will lose it. Whoever sows but does not save his life, will eventually receive it back multiplied indefinitely. It is true of all life, and therefore of yours and Mine. If I be not lifted up, I abide by Myself alone. If I die I reproduce Myself in millions of hearts. I will draw all men unto Me, if I am lifted up". The Christ without a cross must be forever alone. The Christ on the cross exhibits the law of the cross as that of the harvest. There will be duplication and reduplication. Christ the seed, Christians the harvest. The cross and missions are here forever married in holy union by Jesus Himself under the holy law of reproduction. "What God has joined together, let no man put asunder". So the Teacher Himself seals this thought. How real and rich the Johannine conception of the extension of the kingdom! From this author the "Great Commission" is indeed absent, but from the Jordan to the cross in His Gospel there is the profound truth constantly asserted: Every real disciple brings another. The church itself is the harvest from the Christ-sown seed on Calvary.

Missionary enthusiasm is thus the revelation of the vitality of the new life in Christ. Regeneration issues in spiritual reproduction as normally as generation produces generation in the physical life. Far be it from any one to abate one jot

or tittle of absolute imperativeness of the King's order to go into all the world and preach the good news to every creature. Without treason to His authority no one dares dilute the power of the sacredness of that command. Yet from the Fourth Gospel we see how true it is that men filled with the Christ life would have made the effort to win others to such a glorious Lord. The great mandate rests upon the life that is within our souls. The followers of the Saviour who gives such a life should carry the message that brings that life to the ends of the earth because of that life itself. Worldwide evangelization is the ideal of spiritual life. Questions of geography are impertinent. What then is missionary work?

Merely Andrew and John seeking their kin, and saying: "We have found the Christ!" Philip in all lands answering to the prejudiced Nathanaels, "Come and see"; the woman preaching out of a full experience, "Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did. Can this be the Christ?"; those who proclaim in the strength of their unanswerable experiences, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind"—incontestable preamble—"now I see"—inalienable assurance—"Do you also wish to become His disciples?"—glorious invitation! Missionary activity is only the law of the cross in our daily lives, sowing ourselves and reaping a harvest, scattering all that we are in all spheres and receiving back multiplied the power we scattered. Missionary biography? What is it but the story of men and women who felt some of the celestial passion that brought Jesus to this world, and buried themselves, as we say, in all lands, and among all races, that from their germinal consecration there may be reaped a garner full of saved lives out of the very soil in which they sowed themselves.

(1) It is true of the divine life itself. God had not finished His work when He made the material universe. The cosmos is simply the materialization of the divine thoughts. The revelation of the divine personality was yet to come. In that great resolution, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness", He would duplicate Himself, so far as it was possible, in terms of human life. Man was intended to be God's shadow cast on earth. "We are His offspring". He is a Father and we are to be His sons. The incarnation reveals creation's ideal. Jesus was the divine artist proof of God. Immanuel discloses the meaning of image and likeness. Redemption is the process of making us in the image of Christ, who is the image of God. Regeneration is that act of the Holy Spirit which makes us spiritual. The church is spiritual because it is composed of those who have been born of the Spirit. The ideal church is a paraphrase of Christ.

(2) This must also be true of the Christian life precisely because it is true of God's life. All grades of existence are both limited and stimulated by this law of reproduction. Grass of the field produces grass of the field, fish of the sea produce fish, fowl of the air perpetuate fowl of the air. There is both conformity to type and perpetuation of species. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Thoughts produce thoughts, emotions produce emotions, volitions produce volitions. Sinners produce sinners, therefore avoid them. Christians produce Christians as their spiritual progeny. Missionary activity is the working out in practical Christian life of this universal law of reproduction, the religious analogue of this Edenic method. It explains the zeal of prophet and apostle, it interprets the glorious helplessness of those who said, "We cannot but speak the things we have both seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). As the church is the divine life in men organizing itself; as sanctification is the divine life more and more fully enlarging itself and growing within us; as separation from the world, that peculiarity of the people of God which is a mark of the holy nation, is only the treating of worldliness as waste, so missionary effort in all



forms is only that divine life multiplying itself in others. The whole mass is leavened by multiplication of the yeast germ. Contagion is the method of the Kingdom of God. Infinite germination is the process, and that is infinite reproduction. Therefore, how can they believe in Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher? Life infusing life is the law for God and nature and man. Mere machinery is like the dead stick which Gehazi laid on the face of the lifeless boy. Therefore no printing press can ever render the pulpit obsolete. Individual Christian life sustained by organization, growth, and waste, but the species called Christian preserved through this reproduction. The divine cause the life of God, the human instrumentality is the personal energy of the redeemed man.

Missions and spiritual vitality are synonymous. We have organization highly developed. We are rich in some rare characters that grow up to bless the world. Never as now were religious specialists abounding who say, "This one thing I do" and count all else as waste. What we need is a vitality that shall reproduce ourselves. The decline of interest in missions is not due to the wearing away of the romantic sentimental veneer with which missionary life has been overlaid; nor to the evaporation of motive; nor to the inroads of "new theology" which is said to "cut the nerve of missions"; nor to any of the many like causes which a shallow observation assigns. It is due to low vitality within ourselves, to an anæmic spiritual life in individual men and women. The great question which should agitate us is not that concerning the state of the heathen after death, but the condition of the Christian before death. Our anxieties should center not so much on the relation of God's mercy to those who never heard of Christ as upon the selfish indolence of those who profess to know and love the Christ in this life. Within myself, into the depths of my own heart, the keen searching probe must be run. Am I dead while I have a name to live? Just here will be found the true explanation of most of that indifference which we are, in the evil spirit of self-excuse, too prone to attribute to other causes. Missionary success is only the extension, through the areas of concentric circles, of that first joyous impulse which we found in ourselves when we first believed, the enthusiasm for others and the efforts to have them share our rapture. This reawakened reproductive energy means joy to our own hearts, a revival in our own churches, and the triumph of Christ on earth. Let us bring to the quickening Christ all our feebleness and failure, and let us count as very little all our ponderous machinery of organization, our attainments in personal growth, and regard as purely Pharisaic our censure of worldliness as waste, unless with these functions of life we shall also have in enthusiastic abundance that propagating energy which belongs as essentially to genuine life as the others. Let every living thing bring forth "after its kind".

## SANCTIFICATION THROUGH THE TRUTH.

(ST. JOHN 17: 17.)

BY REV. HORACE W. TILDEN, D. D.,

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This is one of the shining gems of John. Its light reaches through to the very end of an accomplished salvation. The prayer of Jesus is the same as the purpose of God. Hence we here learn that it is the plan of the Father to make personally holy Christian believers by means of His revealed word. The Holy Spirit is our sanctifier, but He employs the Scriptures of truth as an instrumentality in the work.

Now while this is a divine work and utterly beyond the reach of human power, it cannot be that Christians are wholly passive while it is being accomplished. Our sympathetic co-operation is required and along the line of the Spirit's working. We must make ourselves familiar with the oracles of truth if we would be sanctified through them. Not even the Spirit of God can cleanse us by something that is foreign to our thought or life. The water of truth can do nothing for the heart unless it can get into familiar contact with it. We must seek the water of the word if we would have our iniquities sponged out and our virtues developed.

We then dare to risk this proposition. The influence of the Holy Spirit upon the believer, is proportional to that believer's sympathetic knowledge of the word of truth. The more men saturate their minds with the thoughts of God's word, the freer course will the Spirit have to run through their lives and be glorified. The paths of His going are thus many and easily traveled.

We are aware that certain Christians claim direct communication with the Lord apart from the word, and hence put less than full value upon it. But their interior voices are not infallible except they abide the test of the inspired standard which is the criterion of all spirits. Hence good as the lives of these people generally are, they err upon a fundamental point, and as a result their eccentricities are often as noticeable as their excellencies.

But these are not alone among those who slight the word as a means of sanctification. There are found Christians in almost every community who value highly emotional experiences such as are induced by the excitements of large meetings and the exhortations of the religiously fervent, and reckon the state of mind so reached to be that of complete sanctification. Such emotional experiences must not be lightly spoken of, but when they are produced by a mere human excitation of our religious natures they soon burn out and leave us poorer than before.

If you burn the shavings up without setting the wood on fire, you have not wherewith to kindle another blaze. It is a mistake to suppose, as these do, that the Holy Spirit is the emotional person of the Trinity. He frequently has nothing whatever to do with the religious excitements met with, but moves men always by solid considerations through the medium of substantial truth. The outward display of Pentecost will never be repeated. The kingdom comes without observation. Sanctification of character is a sturdy work. It is not effected mainly by an origination of sweet emotions, but by a radical renovation of the whole life. It is the republication of God's moral image in every thought and act of the man, and is

often wrought out in storm and winter struggle, as other great achievements are.

But coming to more direct and positive ground, we find a multitude of Christians, so large that it includes almost all, confessing, even lamenting, the lack of the Spirit's power in the churches, and yet who do not see that it is they themselves that are compelling the lack. They have clogged the only channel through which the Spirit can come to the churches. Preachers and laymen alike are declaring that the great crying need of the Christians is the influence of the Holy Spirit upon them, and yet they say almost nothing about the divinely prescribed way of enjoying that influence without measure.

The sermon that is preached from the depths of Biblical truth cannot get to men without being charged with divine influence. Let the members of a church fill their minds with the gems of inspiration, and their hearts would soon be full of the Spirit. But we pray for the presence and power of God upon us and then so violate the conditions made that we can feel neither. We ask for God's blessing and then make impossible the blessing we seek. No one doubts the need of the Spirit—nor His willingness to bless—and yet we are all the time dwelling on these, and meanwhile neglecting the means by which the blessings can come.

What is the use to come to men in a dark cave, and then tell them their need of sunlight: or to accompany hungry men to tell them that they need food? The thing to be done is to tell them how to get sunlight and food. God cannot bless any man according to His fulness, but according to the man's receptivity. When we know where the blessing comes, we should straightway put ourselves into that place. If we seek the sanctification of the Spirit, get divine truth into the heart, through which the Spirit works.

Zachaeus climbed the tree to find out which way Jesus was going and he gained a guest and a Saviour in one. Get up into the branches of scripture truth and you will find the way the Spirit is going and gain His impulse.

Our hearts must be turned Zion-ward if we want to reach Zion. A man must do the best he can to understand God, with his natural powers, if he would enjoy the divine aid. This is the established order, first the natural, then the spiritual. The water was, then the wine came to be. Master the truth of the Bible by the use of your mental powers as you would master any other truth and then the Spirit gives an edge to it, vitalizes it, turns it into veritable food, makes it a flame to melt the carnality of the nature, and brings it on towards the current of unselfish living.

Not only light and heat come from the sunshine, but a third, a chemical quality called actinic. The effect is beyond that of light and heat. But this actinic ray does not act apart from light and heat, but always in their track, though it is above both. So the Spirit's power is always directed along the line of inspired truth; and in proportion as we get fully in line of this truth shall we feel the actinic power of our divine Sanctifier. We must prepare the plate if we would have the sun take a picture for us. So of our work and the Spirit's; if we prepare a plate the picture will not fail. There is no electricity generated by the electric wire, but when we put up the wire as a definite channel it will do the work we ask. So the Holy Spirit is evermore filling the moral spaces all about us and as ready to act for our good as electricity to act through the wire we stretch for it. But He cannot act for our sanctification the best way until we put up the wire. If you want water from the reservoir you must not expect it to come unless you lay pipes for its flow. The fulness of the fountain will not lay the pipes. All powers of good have their appropriate channel through which to flow, and every reasonable man will look for good only in these particular channels.

A plain duty is thus made manifest. God has not promised to give the Holy



Spirit to them who ask, when the asking means no more than the utterance of words. It needs to be said again and again that the Holy Spirit does not wield the truth in such a way as to relieve man from the study of it. We may complain that we lack time for the study of the Bible. We may say that other things absorb all our attention, but nothing of the sort can atone for a lack of acquaintance with the scriptures of truth, and nothing can supply the loss of the Spirit's blessing thereby. God is not pleased with our compliments to His word, so long as we neglect any attention to it. Our hope for a more rapid advancement towards Christ-like character lies in better studied Bibles. The trouble with the church is not that it is wicked, but that it is weak. The Christian goes about his work with languid step. The spirit is willing, but feeble. The churches need a new feast of heavenly bread, to give more vigor of holy choice and action. When the hosts of God shall turn with greater eagerness to this word of life, then they will go forth to the renewed conflict "terrible as an army with banners". Christian effort can be sustained only by Christian provender. The overflowing life of Jesus coming into believing hearts through the Spirit will make the church invincible.

## THE DRAMATIC MOVEMENT IN ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

BY REV. WILLARD BROWN THORP,

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Do you remember when first you stumbled upon this "Gospel according to St. John" in the old Bible at home in your childhood, and read those strangely impressive and mysterious words of the Prologue?

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD. THE SAME WAS IN THE BEGINNING WITH GOD. ALL THINGS WERE MADE BY HIM; AND WITHOUT HIM WAS NOT ANYTHING MADE THAT WAS MADE. IN HIM WAS LIFE; AND THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF MEN. AND THE LIGHT SHINETH IN DARKNESS; AND THE DARKNESS COMPREHENDED IT NOT.

It is like the opening movement of a great oratorio. And that, perhaps, more truly than any other word expresses the quality of this Book of John.

Then from out that background of primal mystery emerges a human figure, the prophet of the wilderness.

THERE WAS A MAN SENT FROM GOD, WHOSE NAME WAS JOHN. THE SAME CAME FOR A WITNESS, TO BEAR WITNESS OF THE LIGHT.

We find ourselves on the banks of the Jordan where John is baptizing; and in another moment the central figure comes quietly upon the scene.

BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD, WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD.

Not a word of description is given. The Christ is simply presented as moving about among the crowds; and one and another of John's disciples go to Him, and are convinced that this is indeed He that is to come.

Two striking acts of Jesus are now introduced,—one at Cana of Galilee, the making of water into wine, which gives us a glimpse of the social surroundings in which He had lived; the other in Jerusalem, the driving of the money-changers from the temple, with the accompanying outburst of comment and criticism. Thus far it has been almost entirely a record of deeds, the words being confined to a few laconic utterances. Now action gives place to speech, and we have the night incident with Nicodemus, yielding such great sayings as "Ye must be born again", and "God so loved the world". A day scene follows, by the well at noon in Samaria, the conversation with the Samaritan woman leading up to the great words:

GOD IS A SPIRIT: AND THEY THAT WORSHIP HIM MUST WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH.

The action now shifts to Jerusalem: and the healing of a lame man waiting his turn at the pool of Bethesda is chosen as the incident about which gathers a discourse in reply to the charge that He "not only brake the Sabbath but called God His own Father".

And now we come to what may be called the great Third Act in this dramatic development. It is the crisis in Galilee; and we have the feeding of the multitude by the lake, the attempt to make Him king, the withdrawal into the mountain to pray, the storm on the lake, and on the morrow the great discourse centering about the words,

I AM THE LIVING BREAD WHICH CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN.

And as the result of it all we see Him abandoned by all but the Twelve, to whom He says, "Will ye also go away?" and Peter makes answer, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life".

The Fourth Act brings us to Jerusalem and the porches of the temple. We see Jesus in the midst of controversy, parrying the thrusts of the scribes and occasionally uttering great words that ring immortal through the ages.

I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

IF ANY MAN WILLETH TO DO HIS WILL, HE SHALL KNOW OF THE TEACHING.

BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS, I AM.

YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.

I AND THE FATHER ARE ONE.

I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD: THE GOOD SHEPHERD LAYETH DOWN HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP.

Chapters seven to ten are filled with these things, all leading up to the great event of the raising of Lazarus, enshrining the immortal words,

I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.

The last act begins in the quiet of Bethany, opens out into the swelling strains of the triumphal entry, pauses a moment for discourses which yield such sayings as,

EXCEPT A GRAIN OF WHEAT FALL INTO THE GROUND AND DIE,—and—

I, IF I BE LIFTED UP WILL DRAW ALL MEN UNTO MYSELF,—

then enters the peaceful atmosphere of the upper room for those last discourses with the disciples,—and finally breaks into the rude and jarring discords of the trial, and the silent and majestic solitude of the cross. The treatment of each of these scenes, with all the minor episodes, is a consummate work of art.

And then, after all seems to be over, comes the epilogue of the resurrection, which is treated by John with a delicacy of feeling surpassing all the other evangelists. It is centered about three scenes, that with Mary Magdalene in the garden, that with doubting Thomas, and that with Simon Peter by the lake of Galilee, with the words,

LOVEST THOU ME? \* \* \* FEED MY SHEEP.

And the Book, which opened with the sonorous notes of the Prologue, "In the beginning was the Word", comes down to the level of every-day life in the simple words with which the writer lays down his pen,

And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written.



Such in merest outline is the presentation which this Book makes of the life of Christ. We see at once that it is no mere chronicle. It is a work of art, a literary composition of the highest order, with a dramatic unity and progress which would make it an admirable basis for a great oratorio. As soon as we grasp this fact, we have the explanation of many of those striking differences that exist between it and the other three Gospels, which are comparatively artless records of such recollections of Jesus' words and works as survived in the early church.

## \* ST. JOHN'S TEACHING OF FATHERHOOD AND SONSHIP.

BY RT. REV. FREDERIC DAN HUNTINGTON, S. T. D.,

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Whatever view Christian believers may take of the person, or the character, or the doctrine, of the Fourth Evangelist, or in whatever aspect he may be presented to the mind of the Christian Church, his chief claim upon our reverence, our confidence, and our obedient attention must rest on what he affirms of God. Manifold and luminous as are the subjects of study belonging to him, as Apostle, Evangelist, Instructor, Author and Beloved Disciple, yet superior to every other element in his greatness, is his authority as an inspired witness to the ministry and mediation of the second Person in the Trinity, God the Son. No Biblical writer creates an impression of living and speaking so habitually and completely encompassed in an atmosphere distinctly supernatural, or, to use the word more strictly accurate and descriptive, superhuman. Without the slightest qualification of a full and entire humanity, or manhood, he adds to every intellectual and temperamental quality that of dwelling in the serenity, purity and radiance of a world other than this. The voice speaking out of that loftier sphere is never so penetrating or commanding as when it assures us of the mind and will and love of Him to whom both worlds belong. By virtue of this divine eminence he is distinctively the apostolic theologian, to a higher degree than St. Peter or even than St. Paul.

Verifying this statement we need to look not much beyond the indefinable but yet definite style and tone of everything preserved to us that John wrote. That it should not have suppressed or forbidden a large part of the strained and narrow criticism, beyond any necessity of truth or scholarship, which has attempted to invalidate the evidence for the genuineness of his Gospel is discreditable to literary candor. This Gospel, without systematic or scientific intention, on its face, with a form and method singularly original, is a demonstration from end to end, of our Lord's divinity. No such object, on the part of the writer, is expressly apparent on its pages. As a biography, or an abridgement or fragment of one, without pretention or formality, it opens the eternal mystery of revelation with the utmost simplicity of narrative and with unadorned reports of dialogue, of divinely exalted meditation, and of marvellous discourse, which all after-ages were to read, study and ponder. But the special wonder is this. While, in no one expression, and no specific affirmation, is Christ represented as declaring Himself to be God, and in no language that a serious Gnostic could reject, yet the evangel as a whole offers a demonstration of his superhuman nature and relations such as

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\* This article is especially valued as it was written only a few months (September, 1903) before Bishop Huntington's death. He wrote that he felt at first he could not accede to the request to contribute for the series in the press, but "since coming to that decision I have been particularly struck with the repeated repetition of the name 'Father' by our Lord in relation to the First and Second Persons in the Trinity. This impression was so strong that I put my thoughts about it at once in writing". To all who knew Bishop Huntington, this article will prove peculiarly reminiscent of the early period of a long and distinguished career.

no Unitarian ventures to question, and at which even the Arian stands in awe. After the Oriental proem the book is one uniform, consistent, unvarying representation of the relation of oneness between two Persons, God and Jesus Christ, under the personal names and natures of Father and Son. Read the whole through, with this in mind, and this peculiarity of Fatherhood and Sonship becomes more and more signal and remarkable. As a proof of the absolute unity or oneness of the two in their nature, and so of the Saviour's proper divinity, nothing could be more conclusive. Parent and child, two personalities with one and the same nature, need neither analogy nor illustration.

Yet there can be no denying the fact that an unorthodox and uncatholic theology has extensively used this fact of parental and filial relationship to support the heretical theory of Christ's inferiority or subordination to the Creator, the Jehovah of the Old Testament and the monotheist's only Deity.

How is that error to be met?

1. In the human generation, the inferiority of the Son to the Father is temporary, not permanent.
2. It does not necessarily or uniformly imply superiority in the parent, intellectual, moral, physical, or any kind of power.
3. The Catholic doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son sets a final limit to the force of the analogy and its doctrinal use in the Creed.
4. In every possible form of teaching short of an explicit and literal declaration, St. John's Gospel provides scriptural authority for the Nicene formula.

Assuming the genuineness and authenticity of the First Epistle of St. John, that Epistle sustains the Trinitarian dogmatic teaching of the Gospel.



## A HIDDEN REVELATION.

(ST. JOHN 21: 15-17.)

BY REV. JAMES CHURCH ALVORD,

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It is one of the misfortunes of English readers of the Bible that certain very delicate and subtle shades of thought lurk, untranslatable, or at least untranslated, in the original languages. This is particularly true of the Greek of the New Testament. This paper takes for its whole subject one such illusive turn of thought in the last chapter of John.

This chapter was added after the rest of the book had been written. The closing verse of the twentieth chapter is evidently intended to finish the Gospel as well. That the "beloved disciple" felt the story of the twenty-first chapter too personal, too intimate, that he shrank from revealing this wondrous prophecy of Jesus concerning himself is certain. By what means, or by whose urging he was induced to add this heavenly tale, we know not. All we know is that we have it, a treasure beyond purchase. Let that suffice.

We are not, however, dwelling on this whole great treasure, but on one special pearl in the garland, somewhat dimmed and clouded by its English setting. This pearl you will find in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth verses of the chapter. Here is recorded a conversation between Jesus and Peter. There is a question, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" and an answer, "Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee", followed by a command, "Feed My sheep". It is true that this last phrase is better rendered "Shepherd—or tend—My sheep"; that there is an added touch of the infinite tenderness of Christ in the fact that He first entreats, "Shepherd My lambs", even before He thinks of the wandering sheep, but it is not of this that we are speaking. Suggestively tempting as these two thoughts are, we pass them by.

The main, the primal thing lies in the meaning of that word translated love. It is two words. In the English there is but one, "Lovest thou Me?" "I love Thee"; as if the Master and the disciple caught at the same term. This is just what they did not do. For there are two kinds of loving, and two Greek words for loving. The English has but one. So we are fain to bungle at the subtle, the evasive, the profound revelation here recorded.

Now, the first kind of loving is the love we bear for men at large, for the world or for the church universal, for the truth, for a neighbor, for an enemy. This the Greeks called by a word yet remaining for us in English in the noun, "Agapæ", by which we designate the love feasts of the early Christians—a word sometimes found among the Methodists and the Salvationists of our own generation. There is no equivalent for this idea in our vocabulary. "Esteem" is too chilly; "adore" too high flown; "love" too personal. Let us translate it in this talk, bitterly as we shall wrong it, by the verb "esteem".

But there is another style of love, and another Greek word for it, too. This is the love a man has for his father, his mother, his brother, most of all for the maiden he would wed. This also is preserved for us—rather say mummified—in

the English "philter". Love-philter, we call it, but that is tautology, for philter is itself a love charm—a charm that will awaken in a woman the changeless affection of a wife. This second Greek verb, this philter verb, I translate "love".

Now, do you not see the immense significance of the fact that the first time Jesus speaks He uses the word for the *agapæ*—love? "Simon, son of Jonas, esteemest thou Me?" That is, lovest thou Me in the large, general way, as thou oughtest to love the church, the brethren, the world for whose sake thou shalt be crucified? That is a large demand, but Peter, timid, faltering, tumultuous Peter, overleaps its boundaries. Peter will have naught to do with such diluted phrases. He turns to the sweet and solemn thoughts of household affection and cries, "I love Thee". Thou art to me father, brother, child and wife: "I love Thee". The quick change of term, the proffer of this warm and clinging fondness, touches the Master. But He asks again, "Simon, son of Jonas, esteemest thou Me?" Again the passionate soul of Peter changes the verb. Again the confession, "I love Thee". Then comes the splendor of it, the glory of it. At the third asking Jesus uses Peter's word, and questions, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" It is an incident, a chance play on words,—aye, it is more. It is a revelation. By a masterly insistence Peter has drawn from the Saviour the statement that the love binding us to Him flows from the scarlet rush of human blood. It goes way down into the depths, and tugs at familiar heart strings. We love Jesus as we love the little circle around the breakfast table in the home,—and He responds like love for like. There is no face dearer than the face of the Master—nay, not even a mother's. There is no hand more clinging than the hand of the Master—nay, not even a son's. There is no heart nearer than the heart of the Master—nay, not even a wife's. One of the family He is. He sits at our daily board. He bends beside our heavy task. He watches our troubled slumber, He sticketh closer than a brother though all the world desert us. That heart-cry out from the midst of the Old Testament is ours today. We, too, can say, "Very pleasant art Thou unto me, my brother Jesus: Thy love to me is wonderful, surpassing the love of women".

Very many other things is this Redeemer of ours,—Lord of peoples, Light of nations, Saviour of the whole world, Hope of the human race: but to you and me forever and forever is He still "elder Brother, tender Friend". Long before Charles Wesley saw the light of day, Peter, the son of Jonas, hid in the Greek of this Gospel, that last and greatest title of the Lord Christ, "Jesus, lover of my Soul".

## THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

BY REV. C. A. L. RICHARDS, D. D.,

RECTOR EMERITUS OF ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, PROVIDENCE, R. I.

However we regard the Gospel of John, as the work of an apostle directly cognizant of the teaching and life of Jesus, or as the work of a later disciple of the Master who died and rose again, and whose power of self-revelation therefore was not limited to three years beneath the Syrian blue, of one thing we are sure, that he who wrote it cared more for the spirit than for the letter of his Lord's teaching, and that the spirit of Jesus was to him especially a spirit of love. Though it was Paul, not John, who wrote the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians and drew love's portrait in such glowing colors, yet it is John who is known through the churches as the apostle of love. The glory that Paul saw and portrayed John lived in. Its atmosphere was his daily breath. He felt that it was the Master's habitual atmosphere, and it is as love incarnate, love for a season tabernacled in our flesh, that John most clearly revealed Him.

He who wore our flesh still wears it. The church is His body. In the church then love eternal, ever living love, is to-day entabernacled. How far is the casket worthy of the Jewel? How far is the shrine fit for Him who looks out from it on the world? How far is the body the facile instrument of the Spirit of Jesus who condescends to inhabit it?

John tells us that Jesus prayed that His disciples might be one even as He and His Father were one, I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one. Nineteen centuries have gone by. Is that prayer yet fully answered? Is the unity of Christendom the most visible fact as men to-day behold it?

I open my Saturday's paper and find the advertised services for the Lord's Day that is to follow. They are multitudinous. They represent not one broad Holy Catholic Church, which is the communion of all who are or would be saints, but endless divisions and sub-divisions of it. If we think of them as the voices of Christian worship, they must be heard, not in one great vaulted temple, but in endless side chapels thereof. The central nave is empty, the common worship silent; but all round the circuit of the walls go up various conflicting prayers and praises. Yet as incense from a hundred altars may rise distinct and several columns towards heaven, while, as it ascends, those columns draw together and become one common cloud,—so from the countless jarring and discordant voices may rise at last a common chord of praise, a harmony richer and fuller than any unison.

Our Lord's prayer lays no emphasis upon any numerical or visible unity. It is a prayer that His disciples may be one as He and His Father are one, a unity which the Athanasian creed expresses by the scholastic phrase "neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance". If, then, the several bodies of believers, while separate in organization and activity, were of one heart, so that the spiritual union was real and substantial while the ecclesiastical severance was but formal and accidental, it might well be argued that there still remained the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace and that the church was one.

It is very possible to exaggerate the significance of divided Christendom, to



overestimate the necessity of structural unity. Certainly catholicity is of the spirit, not of the letter. Great churches may display the petty mood of the schismatic and sectarian, while in the minutest subdivision of Christian people may yet be nurtured a love of the whole rather than the part, a joy in the common heritage of believers. Yet who can fail to perceive that the fragmentary condition of Christendom is highly symbolical? It expresses and suggests the actual ravages of the spirit of sect, of party, the spirit that magnifies differences. The cities may scarcely feel this, but the villages bitterly recognize the truth. In little hamlets whose worshippers could easily be sheltered in a single modest church and be served by a single minister, three, four, half a dozen, perhaps, of Christian societies strive for preeminence. Each zealously seeks to extend its jurisdiction, to multiply its adherents, to crowd out its neighbors, to survive in the struggle. They emphasize their oppositions. Each down in his inmost depths believes in one Lord, one faith, one brotherhood, one God over all, one Saviour for all, and desires first of all the glory of the one kingdom. Yet each seems mainly concerned, practically occupied in rearing fences and nursing hedges and constructing earth-works, and the world scornfully looks on to see the landmarks so visible and the tillage of the field so poor.

There are those who would not defend who yet excuse the present divisions of Christendom as not without use, as stimulating a healthy rivalry, as spurring to competitive enterprise, as on the whole furthering the general growth. They argue that there is more room for individuality, that the divisions of Christendom may be held to be a useful and providential ordering, and that organic church unity is but a mystic dream. As long as a narrow and false conception of the church prevails, as long as men insist upon agreement in opinion, on rigidity of structure, on uniformity in ritual, so long sects and parties may be the inevitable recoil and reaction, may afford the only opportunity in which differing natures find room to breathe and space to move. So long as a man may be a saint of God ripe for His presence, yet without home or welcome in any particular body of believers; so long as the Anglican Church can find no room for Baxter or Wesley, and the Lutheran Church no room for Zwingle, and New England Congregationalism no room for Channing, and Unitarianism no room for Parker, and Northern and Southern orthodoxy alike no room for Garrison, divisions are the natural consequence, the providential remedy. If the church general be built too small to shelter on earth the destined denizens of heaven, all sorts of out-buildings, rude sheds, dwarfed temples, rickety chapels, make-shift conventicles will spring up, a mushroom growth, on every side about it. Its bigotry palliates their schism. Yet schism and bigotry are evils both. Woe unto them who offend, but woe unto them who cause offense. Both may be forgiven, but neither can be justified, and who of us dare say that he is without sin in this regard?

Certainly the Christian ideal is of one body with one spirit. Certainly spiritual unity is more effectively symbolized and expressed by one organic structure than by a hundred independent and unrelated growths. If we were one in heart how naturally would we approximate in life. What an impressive and convincing spectacle it would be to a jarring and wrangling world. See how these Christians love one another, see how closely they are knit together, how they harmonize their discords, forget their differences, magnify their points of agreement, how every sort of sage and saint, of lowly penitent, of anxious believer, of eager worker finds room and verge enough, large liberty and full opportunity in this body of redeemed humanity, this glad family, this imperial community. Could we but show the darkened realm of heathendom this splendid vision! But,

oh—the difference! What moral weight is lost by our fragmentary condition, what force is scattered and wasted!

It is idle to look for corporate union until spiritual harmony has preceded it. The one church must come, not by surrender of this part to that, or absorption of this part in that, but in a common submission to one Lord who shall be Prince of Peace. As we bow beneath His Spirit we shall perceive how few things in religion are essential, that love is indeed the one thing needful, the sure cement of souls. Already men care less for opinion and more for character: less for theory, more for practice; less for intellectual adhesion, more for moral conformity; less for mint, anise and cummin, more for weightier matters of gospel and law. In all quarters are found those who watch for the morning, who are asking not what must we demand as the price of reconciliation, but what can we yield and sacrifice that has been familiar and dear. With that mood God's people are drawn together, and the time hastens when the church shall indeed be one. Why in the twentieth century may not the miracle be wrought?

## ST. JOHN IN ALL AGES.

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"That little book is a still deeper sea, in which the sun and stars are mirrored, and if there are eternal truths (and such there are) for the human race, they are found in the Gospel of John".—*Herder*.

"This Gospel is the consummation of the Gospels, as the Gospels are of all the Scriptures".—*Origen*.

"This is the unique, tender, genuine, chief Gospel. \* \* \* Should a tyrant succeed in destroying the Holy Scriptures and only a single copy of the Epistle to the Romans and the Gospel according to John escape him, Christianity would be saved".—*Luther*.

"The first three evangelists give us diverse aspects of one glorious landscape. St. John pours over that landscape a flood of heavenly sunshine, which seems to transfigure its very character, though every feature of the landscape remains the same".—*Farrar*.

"The Gospel of John is the most original, the most important, the most influential book in all literature. \* \* \* It is simple as a child and sublime as a seraph, gentle as a lamb and bold as an eagle, deep as the sea and high as the heavens".—*Schaff*.

"The Fourth Gospel is the heart of Christ".—*Ernesti*.

"The Gospel of the world, resolving reason into intuition and faith into sight".—*Westcott*.

"The diamond among the Gospels".—*Lange*.

"The most wonderful of all religious books".—*Biedermann*.

"Written by the hand of an angel".—*Herder*.

"It is a Gospel for the height and likewise for the depth".—*Da Costa*.

"The Plato of the inspired circle".—*Kaufman*.

"John does not argue, he sees, he soars; the eagle is his symbol".—*Schaff*.

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe is said to have remarked in reference to a certain magazine of great literary merit, but at one time somewhat imbued with sceptical thought: "I like to read it, but when I have laid it down, I always read a chapter in the Gospel of John".—

"If the heart studies the Christ as portrayed in this writing, it will need no other proof of His divinity".—*Ellicott*.

"This Gospel speaks a language to which no parallel whatever is to be found in the whole compass of literature; such childlike simplicity, with such contemplative profundity; such life and such deep rest; such sadness and such severity; and above all, such a breath of love".—*Tholuck*.

"These brief sentences \* \* \* as inexhaustible in thought as they are inartificial in language".—*Dr. Alexander Maclaren*.

"Above all do I like to read the Gospel of John".—*Claudius (German poet)*.

"Bird of God! with boundless flight  
Soaring far beyond the height  
Of the bard or prophet old;  
Truth fulfilled and truth to be—  
Never purer mystery  
Did a purer tongue unfold".

—*Poet of the Middle Ages*.



"The doctrine of the Word made flesh shows us God uniting Himself most intimately with our nature, manifesting Himself in a human form, for the very end of making us partners of His own perfection".—*Channing*.

"John's Gospel shows us how deep a sense Jesus had of being a stranger on the earth".—*Beyschlag*.

"In the Four Gospels, or rather in the four books of the one Gospel, the Apostle St. John has lifted higher and far more sublimely than the other three his proclamation, and in lifting it up he has wished our hearts also to be lifted".—*Augustine*.

"It was he who bequeathed to the world in his three works the three-fold picture of the life in God: in the person of Christ (the Gospel); in the Christian (the Epistles); and in the church (the Apocalypse). He anticipated more perfectly than any other the festival of the eternal life".—*Godet*.

"For, verily, beneath the tranquil surface of this Gospel, which is filled to so great an extent with what the Lord Himself said, are deep and fervid ocean-currents of holy life and love, which no one can undertake to explore and describe without being made to feel the dimness of his vision and the feebleness of his speech".—*Hovey*.

"Since Irenaeus it has remained for the sons of the apostolic spirit the crown of the apostolic Gospels".—*Lange*.

"The last proposition,—the Word was God,—is against Arius; the other,—the Word was with God,—is against Sabellius".—*Luther*.

"St. John expresses the Divine voice with absolute authority of spiritual life and death in the present and the future. \* \* \* Through the study of the Apocalypse, we are able in a vague and dim way to understand how that long drawn out living death in Patmos was the necessary training through which he must pass who should write the Fourth Gospel. In no other way could man rise to that superhuman level in which the Fourth Gospel is pitched and be able to gaze with steady, unwavering eyes on the eternal and the Divine, and to remain so unconscious of the ephemeral world".—*Professor W. M. Ramsay*.

"If I live yet, it is for good, more love  
Through me to men: be nought but ashes here  
That keep awhile my semblance, who was John,—  
Still, when they scatter, there is left on earth  
No one alive who knew (consider this!)  
—Saw with his eyes and handled with his hands  
That which was from the first, the Word of Life.  
How will it be when none more saith, 'I saw'?"

\* \* \* \* \*

"To me, that story—ay, that Life and Death  
Of which I wrote 'it was'—to me, it is;  
—Is, here and now: I apprehend nought else".

\* \* \* \* \*

"What do I hear say, or conceive men say,  
'Was John at all, and did he say he saw?  
Assure us, ere we ask what he might see!'"

\* \* \* \* \*

"Such is the burden of the latest time.  
I have survived to hear it with my ears,  
Answer it with my lips: does this suffice?"

For if there be a further woe than such,  
Wherein my brothers struggling need a hand,  
So long as any pulse is left in mine,  
May I be absent even longer yet,  
Plucking the blind ones back from the abyss,  
Though I should tarry a new hundred years!"

*Browning: "A Death in the Desert".*

"Whether we regard the sublimity of its thought, the width and spirituality of its conception of religion, the depth of its moral insight, or the tragic pathos of its story, we cannot but feel that we have before us the work of a master mind. And when we remember how it has moulded the faith and touched the heart and calmed the sorrows of generations of men, we must approach it with no ordinary reverence, and with a desire to penetrate its inmost meaning and become more thoroughly imbued with its kindling power".—*Dr. James Drummond.*

"We would not willingly give up for any other form of narrative a Gospel which reveals to us what the Christ grew to be in the mind of one who leaned on His bosom in youth, had cherished a perpetual recollection of Him throughout long years of toil and suffering for His name, and at the close wrote as in his Master's very presence his testimony to what his Master had been and forever should be—the Light and the Life of men".—*Dr. Armitage Robinson, Canon of Westminster.*





PROGRAMS  
OF THE CONFERENCES

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INDICES  
TO AUTHORS AND TEXTS



## PROGRAMS OF THE CONFERENCES.

### FIRST CONFERENCE. (CHAPTER I.)

\* Held Wednesday, October 21, 1903, at the First Baptist Church, Rev. Henry M. King, D.D., presiding.

#### MORNING.

10.00. The Prologue to the Gospel of St. John. St. John 1 : 1-18.

Professor Clark S. Beardslee, D.D., Hartford Theological Seminary,  
Hartford, Conn.

Discussion.

11.00. Men and Events in the Time of Jesus.

Professor Charles F. Sitterly, Ph.D., S.T.D., Drew Theological  
Seminary, Madison, N. J.

Discussion.

11.45. John the Baptist and His Testimony to Jesus. St. John 1 : 19-37.

Professor William Arnold Stevens, D.D., LL.D., Rochester Theological  
Seminary, Rochester, N. Y.

Discussion.

#### AFTERNOON.

2.30. The Study of the Gospel of St. John.

Professor Wilbert W. White, Ph.D., President Bible Teachers Train-  
ing School, New York.

3.15. "Full of Grace and Truth". St. John 1 : 14.

Professor Henry S. Nash, D.D., Episcopal Theological School,  
Cambridge, Mass.

Discussion.

4.00 The Calling of the First Disciples. St. John 1 : 38-51.

Rev. A. C. Dixon, D.D., Pastor of the Ruggles Street Baptist Church,  
Boston, Mass.

#### EVENING.

7.30. The First Chapter of St. John.

President Wilbert W. White, Ph.D., New York.

8.30. Power to Become the Sons of God. St. John 1 : 12.

Rev. Floyd W. Tomkins, S. T. D., Rector of Holy Trinity Episcopal  
Church, Philadelphia, Penn.

### SECOND CONFERENCE. (CHAPTERS II, III, IV.)

† Held Wednesday, November 11, 1903, at the Mathewson Street Methodist Episcopal Church, Rev. Charles M. Melden, Ph.D., D.D., presiding.

#### MORNING.

10.00. The Miracle at Cana and a Philosophical Discussion of Miracles.

St. John 2 : 1-11.

President Augustus H. Strong, D.D., LL.D.,  
Rochester Theological Seminary, Rochester, N. Y.

Discussion.

\* At each Conference the presiding officer was the pastor or rector of the church at which the Conference was held. Each session was begun with a brief devotional service.

† Rev. Carter E. Cate, D.D., Pastor of the Roger Williams Free Baptist Church, and Chairman of the Conference Committee, presided at the evening session.



- 11.00. The Optimism of Jesus. St. John 4 : 1-42.  
Rev. Frank J. Goodwin, Pastor of the Pawtucket Congregational Church,  
Pawtucket, R. I.  
Discussion.

- 11.45. Jesus and Nicodemus—The New Birth. St. John 3 : 1-15.  
Rev. Edward Abbott, D. D., Rector of St. James's Episcopal Church,  
Cambridge, Mass.  
Discussion.

## AFTERNOON.

- 2.30. Eternal Life through Belief. St. John 3 : 14-21.  
Rev. Albert H. Plumb, D. D.,  
Pastor of the Walnut Avenue Congregational Church, Boston, Mass.  
Discussion.
- 3.15. The Gospel of John in the Spiritual Life of the Churches.  
Rev. Henry M. King, D. D., Pastor of the First Baptist Church,  
Providence, R. I.  
Discussion.

- 4.15. The Source or Condition of Jesus' Strength. St. John 4 : 34.  
Rev. Willis P. Odell, D. D., Pastor of Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church,  
New York.

## EVENING.

- 7.30. Some Characteristics of the Gospel according to St. John.  
Rev. Alexander McKenzie, D. D., Pastor of the First Church,  
Congregational, Cambridge, Mass.

## THIRD CONFERENCE. (CHAPTERS V, VI.)

\* Held Wednesday, December 9, 1903, at the Beneficent Congregational Church, Rev. Asbury E. Krom, presiding.

## MORNING.

- 10.00. The Works of Jesus. I. Resurrection. St. John 5 : 17-30.  
Rev. George P. Eckman, Ph. D., D. D., Pastor of St. Paul's Methodist  
Episcopal Church, New York.  
Discussion.
- 10.45. † The Secret of Jesus' Life. St. John 5 : 30.  
Rev. John Balcom Shaw, D. D., Pastor of the West End Presbyterian  
Church, New York.  
Discussion.

- 11.30. Jesus the Bread of Life. St. John 6 : 30-59.  
Rev. Cornelius Woelfkin, Pastor of the Greene Avenue Baptist Church,  
Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Discussion.

\* Rev. James G. Vose, D. D., Pastor Emeritus of the Beneficent Church, presided at the afternoon session, and Rev. Arthur M. Aucock, Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church, at the evening session.

† Owing to Dr. Shaw's unavoidable detention in New York, this address was postponed to the February Conference.

AFTERNOON.

- 2.30. Symposium by Rhode Island Pastors and Laymen on the Gospel of St. John in the Churches.
- 3.30. Belief the Spring of Religious Action. St. John 6 : 29.  
President N. E. Wood, D. D., Newton Theological Institution,  
Newton Centre, Mass.  
Discussion.

EVENING.

- 7.30. The Confession of Peter—Christ, the World's only Hope and Life. St. John 6 : 68, 69.  
Professor Henry S. Nash, D. D., Episcopal Theological School,  
Cambridge, Mass.

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FOURTH CONFERENCE. (CHAPTERS VII, VIII, IX, X.)

\* Held Wednesday, January 13, 1904, at Grace Episcopal Church, Rev. Edmund S. Rousmaniere, presiding.

MORNING.

- 10.00. Unbelief the Fundamental Sin.  
Rev. B. L. Whitman, D. D., LL. D., Pastor of the Fifth Baptist Church,  
Philadelphia, Penn.
- 10.45. The Personal Equation in the Gospel of St. John.  
Rev. Frederic Palmer, A. M., Rector of Christ Church, Andover, Mass.
- 11.30. Spirit and Life. St. John 7 : 37-39.  
Rev. Amory H. Bradford, D. D., Pastor of the First Congregational Church,  
Montclair, N. J.

AFTERNOON.

- 2.30. The Controversies of Jesus with the Jews.  
Professor Melancthon W. Jacobus, D. D., Hartford Theological Seminary, Hartford, Conn.
- 3.15. The Evidential Value of Miracles.  
Professor Charles W. Rishell, Ph. D., Boston University School of Theology, Boston, Mass.
- 4.00. The Sinlessness of Jesus.  
Rev. William R. Huntington, D. D., Rector of Grace Episcopal Church,  
New York.

EVENING.

- 7.30. Knowledge of the Teaching of Jesus through the Doing of the Will of God. St. John 7 : 17.  
Rev. Francis J. McConnell, Ph. D., Pastor of the New York Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, Brooklyn, N. Y.
- 8.15. Freedom Through the Truth. St. John 8 : 31-36.  
Rev. Everett D. Burr, D. D., Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Newton,  
Newton Centre, Mass.

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\* Rev. Arthur M. Acock, Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church, presided at the afternoon session.

## THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

### FIFTH CONFERENCE. (CHAPTERS XI, XII, XIII.)

\* Held Wednesday, February 10, 1904, at the Central Baptist Church, Rev. John R. Brown, presiding

#### MORNING.

- 10.00. Mysticism in the Fourteenth, Fifteenth and Sixteenth Chapters of the Fourth Gospel.  
Professor Alfred Williams Anthony, D.D., Cobb Divinity School, Lewiston, Maine.
- 10.45. The Works of Jesus. II. Judgment. St. John 5 : 17-30.  
Rev. Charles M. Melden, Ph.D., D.D., Pastor of the Mathewson Street Methodist Episcopal Church, Providence, R. I.
- 11.30. The Secret of Jesus' Life. St. John 5 : 30.  
Rev. John Balcom Shaw, D.D., Pastor of the West End Presbyterian Church, New York.

#### AFTERNOON.

- 2.30. The Light of the World. St. John 12 : 46. (Compare St. John 8 : 12.)  
Rev. Willard Scott, D.D., Pastor of the Piedmont Congregational Church, Worcester, Mass.
- 3.15. The Attracting Power of the Cross. St. John 12 : 32.  
Rev. Avery A. Shaw, M.A., Pastor of the Baptist Church in Brookline, Brookline, Mass.

#### EVENING.

- 7.30. How the Gospel was made.  
Professor Frederick L. Anderson, D.D., Newton Theological Institution, Newton Centre, Mass.
- 8.15. The Washing of the Disciples' Feet and the Law of Service. St. John 13 : 1-17.  
Rev. Edwin Alonzo Blake, Ph.D., D.D., Pastor of the Tremont Street Methodist Episcopal Church, Boston, Mass.

### SIXTH CONFERENCE. (CHAPTERS XIV, XV, XVI.)

† Held Wednesday, March 9, 1904, at the Trinity Union Methodist Episcopal Church, Rev. J. Francis Cooper, presiding.

#### MORNING.

- 10.00. The Presence of the Father, Son and Spirit through Obedience to the Commands of Christ. St. John 14 : 21-23.  
Rev. Robert A. Ashworth, M.A., Pastor First Baptist Church, Meriden, Conn.
- Discussion.
- 11.00. ‡ The Method of Jesus with Individuals. St. John 3 : 1-16 and 4 : 5-26.  
President William Douglas Mackenzie, D.D., Hartford Theological Seminary, Hartford, Conn.
- Discussion.

\* Rev. Edward C. Bass, D.D., Pastor of the Tabernacle Methodist Episcopal Church, presided at the evening session.

† Rt. Rev. William N. McVickar, S.T.D., Bishop of Rhode Island, presided at the evening session.

‡ As President Mackenzie could not be present at this hour, his was the opening address of the afternoon session.

AFTERNOON.

- 2.30. The Vine and the Branches. St. John 15 : 1-16.  
Rev. John T. Beckley, D.D., Pastor of the Central Baptist Church, New-  
port, R. I.
- 3.15. The Seventeenth Chapter of St. John.  
Professor Henry T. Fowler, Ph.D., Brown University, Providence, R. I.
- 4.00. The Glorification of the Son of Man. St. John 13 : 31, 32.  
Professor Samuel Hart, D.D., D.C.L., Berkeley Divinity School,  
Middletown, Conn.

EVENING.

- 7.30. Obedience to the New Commandment the Proof of Discipleship. St. John  
13 : 34, 35.  
Rev. Rockwell H. Potter, Pastor of the First Congregational Church,  
Hartford, Conn.
- 8.15. The Coming of the Greeks and the Law of Sacrifice. St. John 12 : 20-32.  
Rev. Henry C. Mabie, D.D., Home Secretary of the American Baptist  
Missionary Union, Boston, Mass.

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SEVENTH CONFERENCE. (CHAPTERS XVII, XVIII, XIX.)

\* Held Wednesday, April 13, 1904, at the Central Congregational Church, Rev. Edward F. Sanderson,  
presiding.

MORNING.

- 10.00. The Teaching Function of the Church.  
Professor Frank K. Sanders, Ph.D., D.D., Yale Divinity School, New  
Haven, Conn.
- 10.45. Jesus the Revelation of the Father. St. John 14 : 6-11.  
Professor Henry C. Sheldon, S.T.D., Boston University School of Theology,  
Boston, Mass.
- 11.30. The Twenty-First Chapter of St. John.  
President Henry G. Weston, D.D., LL. D., Crozer Theological Seminary,  
Chester, Penn.

AFTERNOON.

- 2.30. The Self-Surrender of Jesus Christ. St. John 18 : 11.  
Rev. George M. Stone, D.D., Pastor of the Asylum Avenue Baptist Church,  
Hartford, Conn.
- 3.15. The Crucifixion—"It is Finished". St. John 19 : 30.  
Rt. Rev. Thomas A. Jaggar, D.D., Bishop of Southern Ohio, Cincinnati,  
Ohio.

EVENING.

- 7.30. The Home at Bethany and the Friendships of Jesus.  
Rev. Donald Sage Mackay, D.D., Pastor of the Fifth Avenue Collegiate  
Church, New York.
- 8.15. The Unity of Christianity as Revealed in the Prayer of Christ. St. John 17.  
Professor Henry S. Nash, D.D., Episcopal Theological School, Cam-  
bridge, Mass.

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\* Rev. Fred B. Hill, Assistant Pastor of the Central Church, presided at the afternoon session, and  
Rev. Andrew J. Coultas, Presiding Elder of the Providence District of the Methodist Episcopal Church,  
presided at the evening session.



*THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.*

## EIGHTH CONFERENCE. (CHAPTERS XX, XXI.)

Held Wednesday, May 11, 1904, at All Saints Memorial Church, Rev. Arthur M. Aucock, presiding.

## MORNING.

- 10.30. The Resurrection the Crowning Fact of Christianity. St. John 20.  
Rev. Herbert Welch, D. D., Pastor of the Chester Hill Methodist Episcopal Church, Mount Vernon, N. Y.
- 11.15. Sanctification in the Truth. St. John 17 : 17-19.  
Rev. D. W. Faunce, D. D., Providence, R. I.

## AFTERNOON.

- 2.30. Friendship with Jesus Through Obedience to His Commands. St. John  
15 : 14, 15.  
Rev. John D. Pickles, Ph. D., Pastor of St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church, Boston, Mass.
- 3.15. The Author of the Fourth Gospel.  
Professor Clark S. Beardslee, D. D., Hartford Theological Seminary,  
Hartford, Conn.

## EVENING.

- 7.30. Jesus and Simon Peter at the Sea of Tiberias.—“Feed my Sheep.” St.  
John 21.  
Rev. Galusha Anderson, S.T.D., LL.D., Newton Centre, Mass.
- 8.15. The Commandment of God and Life Everlasting. St. John 12 : 49, 50.  
Rev. Stewart Means, D. D., Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, New  
Haven, Conn.

## INDEX TO AUTHORS.

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(The A. B. degree is indicated by the date after name of college; the B. D. degree by date after name of seminary. Dates in brackets after names of college or seminary indicate period of study without degree. Dates after names of cities, towns and counties indicate pastorates or rectorates.)

EDWARD ABBOTT, D. D., *b.* Farmington, Me.; Univ. of City of New York, 1860; Andover Theol. Sem. (1860-2); Agent of the U. S. Sanitary Commission, Washington, D. C., and with the Army of the Potomac, 1862, 1863; Founder and first Pastor of Stearns Chapel (now Pilgrim) Cong. Church, Cambridge, Mass., 1865-9; Associate Editor of "The Congregationalist," 1869-78; Editor and Joint Proprietor of "The Literary World," 1877-88, and Editor of same, 1895-1903; Minister of St. James's Episcopal Church, Cambridge, since 1878, and Rector since Dec., 1879; Chaplain of the Mass. Senate, 1872-3. *Author:* A Paragraph History of the U. S., 1875; A Paragraph History of the American Revolution, 1876; Revolutionary Times, 1876; History of Cambridge (in Drake's Hist. of Middlesex Co., Vol. 1), 1880; The Long Look Books (Juvenile, 3 vols.), 1877-80; Memoir of Jacob Abbott (Memorial Edition of The Young Christian, 1882); Phillips Brooks, 1900; numerous monographs, sermons, &c.

JAMES CHURCH ALVORD, *b.* Greenfield, Mass.; Williams, 1885; Andover, 1888; Hamilton, Mass., 1888-93; Woonsocket, R. I., 1893—. Contributed articles in the "Congregationalist"; stories in the "Wellspring", &c.

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Dartmouth College), 1875; A Young Man's Difficulties with his Bible, 1877; The Christian Experience, 1880; Resurrection in Nature and in Revelation, 1884; Prayer as a Theory and a Fact (Fletcher Prize), 1885; Hours with a Sceptic, 1893; Inspiration Considered as a Trend, 1897; Shall We Believe in a Divine Providence?, 1899; Advent and Ascension, 1902.

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FRANK JUDSON GOODWIN, *b.* Rye, N. Y.; Amherst, 1884; Union, 1888; Glen Ridge, N. J., 1888-99; Pawtucket, R. I., 1899—. *Author*: A Harmony of the Life of St. Paul, 1895. *Articles*: The Influence of St. Paul's Rabbinical Education on his Spiritual Life (S. S. Times, Aug. 1, 1896); The Rabbinical Cast in St. Paul's Theology (S. S. Times, Aug. 22, 1896); The Place of Miracle in the Modern Christian's Faith (Homiletic Review, Oct., 1898); The Biblical Doctrine of Divine Justice (Homiletic Review, Jan., 1904).

SAMUEL HART, A. M., D. D., D. C. L., *b.* Saybrook, Conn.; Trinity, 1866, and A. M. (in course), 1869; Tutor in Greek, Trinity, 1868-70; Asst. Prof. (1870-3), and Prof. (1873-83) of Mathematics, Trinity; Prof. of Latin, Trinity, 1883-99; Prof. of Doctrinal Theology and of the Prayer Book, and Vice-Dean, Berkeley Div. Sch., 1899—; Registrar of the Diocese of Conn., 1874—; Custodian of the Standard Book of Common Prayer, 1886—; Secretary of the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church, 1892—. *Editor*: Satires of Juvenal, 1873; Satires of Persius, 1875; Scipio's Dream, with Notes; Bishop Seabury's Communion-Office, with Notes, 1874; Manuals for Confirmation (1895), and Communion (1895), and Family Prayers (1902). *Author*: Monographs, Discourses, and Addresses on Connecticut History and American Church History.

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Christian Register; The Monthly Religious Magazine; The Church Monthly; The Gospel Messenger. *Author*: Sermons for the People; Christian Believing and Living; Divine Aspects of Human Society; Helps to a Holy Lent; New Helps to a Holy Lent; The Fitness of Christianity to Man (Bohlen Lectures); Lectures on Preaching; A Pastoral Supplication; An Old Man's Old Testament Petitions; Personal Christian Life in the Ministry; The High Calling; The Gospel and the People; Christ in the Christian Year (two vols.); Gospel and Judgment; Good Talking a Fine Art; The Golden Rule Applied to Social Life; Christ and the World; Forty Days with the Master; Separate Poems, &c.; Editor of two Collections of Poems:— "*Lyra Domestica*", and "*Elim*".

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HENRY CLAY MABIE, D. D., *b.* Belvidere, Ill.; old Univ. of Chicago, 1868; Bapt. Union Theol. Sem., 1875; Rockford, Ill., 1869-73; Oak Park, Ill., 1873-5; Brookline, Mass., 1876-9; Indianapolis, Ind., 1879-83; Belvidere, Ill., 1883-5; St. Paul, Minn., 1885-8; Minneapolis, Minn., 1888-90; tour of Asiatic Missions of the Am. Bapt. Miss. Union, 1890; Cor. Sec. of the Am. Bapt. Miss. Union,

1890—. Has devoted the last fourteen years to a wide touring of the Northern States of America, holding numerous conferences on foreign missions. *Author*: Romanism in Four Chapters, 1890; In Brightest Asia, 1893.

FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL, Ph. D., *b.* Dresden, Ohio; Ohio Wesleyan, 1894; Boston Univ. Sch. of Theol., 1897; Boston Univ., Ph. D., 1899; West Chelmsford, Mass., 1894-6; Newton Upper Falls, 1897-9; Ipswich, 1899-1902; Harvard Street, Cambridge, 1902-3; Brooklyn, N. Y., 1903—.

DONALD SAGE MACKAY, D. D., *b.* Glasgow, Scotland; Univ. of Glasgow, 1885; Seminary of the New College, Edinburgh, 1889; St. Albans, Vt. (Cong.), 1890-4; Newark, N. J. (Reformed), 1894-9; Collegiate, New York, 1899—.

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